UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF THE DESTINED HUMAN BEING

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Six people fitting the above description of "destined human beings" were studied as far as possible from their own work, i.e. writings, paintings, music, speeches, letters, etc. They were studied on two levels, that of their own metier, and then how they retained that holistic quality which enabled them to remain in touch with a greater vision of life and humanity as a whole. They are Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt van Rijn, Johann Sebastian Bach, Winston Churchill, Albert Einstein, and, as an exception to some things which have been said, Pablo Picasso.

It is hoped that this research demonstrates that these people understand humanity and its needs for religion, and that their experiences and interpretations thereof help humanity engage those needs sanely and fruitfully. In other words they enrich religion as a quest. Different senses of identity, modes of engagement, models of reality, methods of expression are examined, all of which demonstrably fit into Cumpsty's Theory of Religion of Belonging. One of the case studies demonstrates what happens when the sense of belonging is impaired.

The thesis takes a very broad view of what constitutes religious experience, but the expressions of the case studies can be considered as religion at its best, or most universal.

Acknowlegements:

The help, support and encouragement I have received have come from my family, particularly my husband, John Wayland. Without them all I would never have finished it.

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RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND COMMUNICATION IN THE DESTINED HUMAN BEING: A STUDY IN COSMIC TRUST AND THE BOUNDARIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION.

INTRODUCTION

This is a thesis in the science of religion, although an overt concern with orthodox or organised religion is seldom present.

It is a study of several people of outstanding ability who express themselves beautifully. They transcend their cultures and serve their fellow human beings by communicating what they understand of the world. Their works remain well within the grasp of their normal contemporaries.

This thesis was occasioned by a long standing recognition, indeed puzzlement, concerning some extraordinarily talented individuals, not perhaps in every age but certainly of sufficient regularity to constitute a type, whom we came to speak of as "destined". Frequently they were good people by almost any standard, where "good" carries with it an overall fondness and concern for the human race and the world, and not a desire to dominate, convert, or impose their will for change on humanity at all costs. The individuals studied have abilities which they used to express

themselves in ways that resulted in the enrichment for the human race.

All the case studies, with the possible exception of J.S. Bach, had a sense of destiny. Bach knew he was very good at music, but his natural humility precluded him from feeling that he was one of the greatest composers in the world.

They have not despised the religion of their times, indeed they have been at ease with the fact that orthodoxy has real value, but they were aware of its limitations. They could express themselves in terms different from conventional religious phraseology, while making substantial use of its symbol. None were "misunderstood" by their contemporaries.

"Many a life", says Alan Paton writing of Smuts, "is tragic because a man does not know what he is. He is a man of affairs, but wishes he had been a poet. He is carnal, but wishes he had been religious. Religious, he wishes he had been carnal. So bound by the one and desiring the other, he is nothing at all. But Smuts combined and contained them all, and continuing, so also continent. He possessed them, and was not possessed by them. He was, as we say, the master of himself."
These "destined human beings" are studied in an attempt to

understand a few men who became "the master of himself".

The case studies all have genius. Kenneth Clark, the art critic, once wrote: "However irrational, I believe in genius. I believe that almost everything of value which has happened in the world has been due to individuals. Nevertheless, one can't help feeling that the supremely great figures in history - Dante, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Newton, Goethe - must be to some extent a kind of summation of their times. They are too large, to all embracing, to have developed in isolation." [1]
However, to be a genius is not necessarily to be what we mean by "destined human being." Maurice Cohen says, "The example of the incomparable Newton, as well as of contemporaries like Millikan and Eddington, should warn us against assuming that those who achieve great things in physical science will necessarily display unusual wisdom in politics and religion. It is not merely that devotion to science leaves little time to acquire comparable knowledge on these more complicated subjects. When Harvey suggested that Newton pay less attention to his theosophic and theologic speculations, the latter proudly rebuked him 'Sir, I have given these subjects prolonged study.' But the result of this study, as seen in Newton's commentary on the Book of Daniel and on the Apocalypse, is a striking indication of how

[1] Kenneth Clark: Civilisation, Chap. 1.

highly specialized is human genius." [2]

Some of our case studies are persons of multi-faceted talent, several are mono-faceted, but they are geniuses, and, with the exception of Picasso, are integrated human beings writ large. Certainly they are not those people whose creativity is driven by neuroses, the recognition of which led Jung to disagree with Freud's understanding of libido, and suggest that neuroses can generate, not only absorb, psychic energy.

Six people have been studied in depth. They are: Leonardo da Vinci, one of the Universal men of the Rennaissance: Rembrandt van Rijn, Dutch painter of the seventeenth century: Johann Sebastian Bach, German composer of eighteenth century: Winston Churchill, English statesman and leader: Albert Einstein, the physicist, Swiss/German/American: and Pablo Picasso the painter, Spanish, all of the twentieth century.

They were chosen from a list which originally also included Shakespeare, Michaelangelo, Dante, Blake, Mozart, and Jan Smuts, all of whom fitted the description of "destined human beings".

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[2] Einstein His Life & Times: P.430: Morris Raphael Cohen, reviewing Einstein's "The World as I see it".

They were studied, as far as possible, from their own works, whether writings, paintings, poetry, speeches or letters. They have been studied on two levels, that of their own metier and then, how they retained that holistic quality which enabled them to remain in touch with a greater vision of life and humanity as a whole.

The people studied are, for the most part, integrated in Paton's sense, that is, they are at home with who and what they are. They are at ease with their world-view, and accept the outside world for what it is - faulted, but worth belonging to. If they had not, they would not have bothered to try and express themselves as they did. Money, success or power are not their prime goals, even in the case of Churchill, the political leader. Picasso dominated the people round him, but he was content living in bohemian splendour indulging his phenomenal creativity. He was mean until he was rich, and then money had no hold over him, he simply did not care about it. One is reminded of Noel Coward, who said that as soon as he had "arrived" (i.e. when his first successful play was produced), he immediately became "completely unspoilt".

With our style of studying aspects separately we often miss or

dismiss some part of a person as irrelevant or unimportant or, conversely, over-emphasise the unimportant, and so arrive at an inaccurate picture. In order to minimize this sort of partial and largely subjective criticism, an effort will be made to examine these people and their achievements as objectively and as holistically as possible.

The immediate occasion of this thesis was an introduction to John Cumpsty's general theory of religion and in particular to what he had to say about post-paradigmatic religion, or "cosmic trust" as he calls it, on the one hand, and what he had to say about religious discourse on the other. It appeared that this offered a way of investigating further the phenomenon of a "destined human being."

While the thesis is concerned with extraordinary people in the Western world over several centuries, it is motivated by a concern for all those contemporary and ordinary persons who, in a rapidly changing experience, have difficulty finding a home within the inherited symbol sets for reality.

Perhaps never before have people searched for meaning (or a home) in such a growing number of alternative world-views and rituals for belonging. One of the results of mass media today is the

availability of a bewildering variety of maps and methods to irradiate life with meaning, self discovery, sparkling excitement, and enormous physical and mental powers. "Destined" people, however, in any age, seem to have found or been born with more inner and cosmic integration than average, and they have used their considerable talents to fully engage in expressing themselves and their observations of life.

Thus Cumpsty's theory also seemed to offered a way of understanding those persons with critical intellect who, while not driven by exceptional talent to find alternative ways of expressing themselves, nevertheless find themselves unable to use only the received religious discourse, a problem widespead in the 20th Century West.

The "destined human beings" chosen for study began with the symbols of their contemporary environments. Indeed, they have elucidated them in various forms that the less-educated can follow. The have considerably extended the limits of communication.

Identity will be our one focus. We ask how, with all their talent and diverse backgrounds, did they seek to answer the question "what is all that out there and how do I relate to it?",

ask how they accepted the received symbol set as the "truth", or if they operated within any of the possible paradigms for reality. How, when for the most part their religion was what Cumpsty calls post-paradigmatic, did they belong, how did they overcome existential alienation. We will ask, "Did their mode of engagement with the world-out-there, driven by their enormous talent, not imply some understanding of the totality that they were engaging with?"

Our other focus will be language. How did they conceptualize to themselves and to those who they would address in their culture the "Cosmic Trust" that they for the most part seemed to share? Could other symbols entirely replace verbal concepts? To what extent could their language (symbol) express a higher reality, a reality which becomes reduced by endless repetition of conventional symbol?

So particular attention will be paid to personal integration, their relationships with the world-out-there, how and what they communicated, i.e. their language and how they used myth and symbol. The case studies did not pursue religion for religion's sake, but they were able to express what they perceived in a variety of ways. Their expressions are at the highest levels.

This research seems to indicate that these people understand humanity and its religion, and that their experiences and interpretations thereof can qualify as religion at its best. For they seek to express the totality as they understand it, in all its diversity, dynamism, flexibility and maleability.

Finally, we will be testing, perhaps refining, the theoretical understanding which gave rise to the project and upon which the analysis is based. The main theoretical framework is provided by Cumpsty's Theory of Religion as Belonging.

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CHAPTER ONE

CUMPSTY'S GENERAL THEORY OF RELIGION

BASICS OF THE THEORY RELEVANT TO THIS STUDY:

There is a strong individual focus in this thesis required by the theory. Cumpsty develops his theory by unpacking the consequences of a definition of what he calls "a paradigmatic understanding of religion", the quest for which occupies Part I of his book.

He states this paradigmatic understanding as follows:-
Religion is concerned with belonging. It is the quest for, maintenance or realization of, belonging to the ultimately-real, however that may be felt or conceived.

The ultimately-real is understood to be that to which the individual most feels the need to belong in order to give meaning to, secure, or otherwise enrich his or her existence.

Such belonging has two aspects: a felt sense of the ultimately-real, together with a minimal conceptualization of the same, and a mode of belonging to that ultimately-real. The latter will vary appropriately with the former.[1]

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[1] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 8, p.173.

Earlier Cumpsty has said of belonging:

The drive to establish and maintain identity is, in the end, a drive for ultimate belonging, which is why I believe the religious drive is *sui generis* and cannot be reduced to more basic elements. The *what* and the *why* of religious activity are one and the same. That is, they are the quest for, maintenance or realization of, belonging to the ultimately-real however that may be understood. Belonging is not static. Belonging includes the creation of needs, not just the satisfaction of them. I have emphasized the need to secure identity and therefore to secure relationship with that which grounds it, but the other side of identity is all-that-out-there. The quest to know self is the quest to know reality. Reality is always open. The quest for belonging is not simply a quest for comfort. It necessarily includes a disturbing enquiry into the reality that one would belong to.[2]

This will be apparent in the case studies. There is no doubt about their knowledge of and faith in life. They belonged thoroughly to their personal Ultimately Reals, they played their parts within the Real, but none of them compromised themselves for the Real, according to their own value systems.

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[2] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 7, p.165.

On the question of identity, the case studies have strongly integrated identities, with the exception of Picasso. There is a distinction to be drawn between "identity" and "personality". A personality is a necessary "front" which is presented to the world. The integrated man does not doubt himself and no longer has need to project himself as something special. He is comfortable with himself in that he accepts what he is.[3]

When faced with set-backs and disappointments in different forms, these figures re-located their parameters and continued with their creative lives.

Cumpsty reasons thus:

The felt sense of the ultimately-real is distilled from the individual's total experience. At the cognitive level, it is the answer to the other side of the life-long question "Who am I?", namely, "What is all-that-out-there?".[4] "There is something to

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[3] Leonardo da Vinci, for example, was homosexual, and while still a very young man a sodomy case was brought against him. He asked several people for help, both powerful and rich, and they denied him. The case came to nothing, but thereafter there is no trace of Leonardo's personal relationships, until he was above suspicion. He was totally discreet, he had friends of both sexes, and he integrated his feminine side highly successfully, particularly in his painting. In other words, his homosexuality did not materially bother him again.

[4] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 8, p.172.

be said, in addition to whatever might be said about the bits and pieces and their relation to each other, about the nature of the whole." [5]

There are only three possible paradigms for the nature of an ultimately-real to which one would belong.

The first he has calls "Nature Religion". It treats of the natural order (nature) as the real, handling it with respect and seeking to maintain its harmonies. It is monistic, a closed system of cause and effect. It understands time to be cyclical. The second type he calls "Withdrawal Religion", identified by the adherents' desire to withdraw from the immediate world of experience physically and affectively. Time here too, is cyclical, but not natural cycles, rather it is in aeons. The third one, and the one which dominates in the culture in which all our case studies moved, is "Secular World Affirming Religion". The reality of the world is strongly affirmed, its ultimateness is denied. The Ultimately Real is transcendent and quite other than the Real world. Here time is linear and new beginnings are possible.

These are Cumpsty's three paradigms. He mentions another model:

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[5] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging, Chapter 4, p.114.

not-yet, a this and a that which transcends it, a real and an ultimately-real. This dichotomy in reality, modelled temporally and spatially, is expected to be overcome when this and the above come together and reality is experienced in its fullness."[7]

According to Cumpsty, religion may manifest in individuals as Pre-Paradigmatic, Paradigmatic or Post-Paradigmatic. Persons classified as pre-paradigmatic may have started on the quest, but have not yet found a home in a tradition. Those who have found a home within a tradition which largely fits into one of the three paradigms, are paradigmatic. Johann Sebastian Bach was one of these. He was quite at ease with the Lutheran doctrine and Church, and the Bible stories and teachings were demanding enough for him to interpret them sublimely in music. He penetrated the rituals and verbal symbols with deeper and deeper insight and remained fulfilled and answered within his paradigm to the end of his life.

The post-paradigmatic form of religion is, Cumpsty says, "the one in which the paradigms are recognized for what they are, paradigms, and people have a need to go beyond paradigmatic religion. Then, even as the symbol set which is recognized as having the best fit with the felt sense of reality, the paradigm

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[7] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 8, p.174.

cannot attract the commitment that would be given to whatever was felt to be absolute." When he says that the paradigms are recognized for what they are, he does not, of course, imply that all persons whose religion is of this type are philosophers, only that they have:
(a) found an affective sense of belonging, (what he calls "cosmic trust") and (b) stopped looking for a cognitive answer to the question "What is all that out there?".[8]

So, the people studied have grown, in a sense, beyond the religious paradigm in which they were grounded. For example, Jan Smuts was accused of having no religion. He found the "tight" survival theology of his childhood's culture much too restrictive for life as a whole, and too small to cope with the greater issues which he encountered at Victoria College Stellenbosch, at Cambridge, and indeed, for the rest of his life. He was, in fact, a deeply religious man, continually looking for understanding and explanations until he died. But it was obvious to his "religious" critics that he did not find their particular theology, rituals, and explanations adequate, and as such he was considered irreligious.

It is not apparent that any of the case studies "stopped looking

[8] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 8, p.220.

for a cognitive answer to 'what is all that out there?'". On the contrary, all the case studies worked until they died on understanding, and expressing what they understood. They imply, by extrapolation of their work, that the quest is continuous. There is always more to penetrate, there is always more to express. There is better and better "belonging."

Cumpsty does not express the situation well when he says of those enjoying "cosmic trust" that "they have stopped looking for a cognitive answer". It will be seen that our case studies are not pre-paradigmatic because they have a cosmic trust, and yet they have not stopped asking questions concerning reality as a whole. On the other hand, they have stopped looking for answers. They communicate, in ways their contemporaries understand, what they learn of the totality more and more effectively. Cumpsty does, however, say that "Cosmic Trust" is not a fully articulated position,[9] because post-paradigmatic religion can almost always be located within one of the paradigms by implication of the individual's chosen mode of engagement with the world-out-there. That being the case it is better that the implied model of what is being engaged with should be made explicit. The difference to which Cumpsty points is that the post paradigmatic person has cosmic trust which rests on realities they have individually

[9] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 12, p.376.

environment. Great efforts have been made to express everything scientifically, or logically, or mathematically, and if it cannot be so expressed, it is considered either untrue or irrelevant. Thus the modern Western felt sense of reality tends to be modelled as monistic but within linear time, that is, it tends to what Cumpsty calls the "cosmos paradigm".[10] This is the attempt to turn science's *methodologically* successful "bracketing-out" of God into an ontology. Cumpsty is at pains to show that while this is attractive it is also illogical. The case study for Picasso illustrates what can happen when a higher Ultimate Reality is "bracketed out". It had unfortunate consequences for Picasso, not least of which was a deep alienation.

MYTH AND OTHER SYMBOL

Cumpsty, following Whitehead, Rumke and Buber as he presents them, says that the essentially religious stance is the individual standing back from all-that-out-there and asking, (at first feeling) what it is, and how one is related to it. Religion is concerned in the first place with totality or with a reality distilled therefrom. This totality is unique, there is only one, and therefore there is no other to which it can be related or compared. As literal discourse functions by relating one thing to another within an agreed frame of reference, it cannot operate as

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[10] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 12, p.378.

a language about a unique totality. One can only speak about it in terms of what it **feels** like to be confronted by it, that is, in the feeling language of symbol.

We must turn, therefore, to a consideration of what Cumpsty has to say about religious discourse and its likely consequences for our enquiry.

In the introduction to Chapter 4, The Nature of Religious Discourse,[11] Cumpsty says:

The nature of religious discourse has concerned many of the best minds of our time. If the position arrived at in the next chapter is correct, then at least since the enlightenment, many critically minded people in the western world have been haunted by an approach that is simply mistaken. Having begun with the words of religion, rather than with the nature of the experience that the words were required to serve, they have been led to look for historical and factual verification of religious belief. It has led them to apply the logic of literal discourse to the language of religion and find it wanting. It is an approach that is as inappropriate as taking a thermometer to look for warm personalities and when it does not help, concluding that warm personalities are not real. That we cannot speak literally of the

[11] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging, Chapter 4, p.73.

primary object of religious concern does not mean that there is nothing to speak about or that religious discourse is nonsense.

Of the distillation of life experience Cumpsty says:
There is one, and I think only one, situation in which experience is necessarily unique, and simply cannot be related to in the I-it mode or spoken of in literal language. This is where one is attempting to arrive at some understanding of the nature and significance of the totality of one's experience, for that is necessarily unique.

This thesis will try to show that there is indeed something to say about religious experience, and that it may be communicated in language or mediums other than factual and logical. Bach's music, in spite of its mathematical precision, is a language of life-experience, as is the work of Leonardo, Rembrandt, and Picasso.

Religious traditions abound in myth. Myth, in this context, is verbal symbol, stories, verbal pictures describing - in the language of the adherents - what their reality feels like. These myths must stay within the parameters of comfortable human understanding. Thus, for example, the myths of Creation (in the Abrahamic traditions) are processional - God created the world

and all that is in it sequentially in six days, and on the seventh day he rested. This myth has, over the last century or so, been threatened by evolutionary theory, physics, geography, astronomy and cosmology. And yet it just won't die. It still gives rise to valid art, music, language, people still believe in it, still use it instead of dead slow, mechanical, inevitable and boring evolution. It expresses life and purpose. Equally, there is good historical evidence that the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt really happened yet the value of this myth lies not in the history itself but in the belief of an escaping people that their god was actively involved in guiding and protecting them, that he was powerful enough so to do and that he had some special relationship with them. The value does not lie in the historical truth of the single event, but mythologically, in its expression of the nature of history as a whole. As such, it has been extremely influential.

Cumpsty says that there are not two realms of experience, that of religious and that of ordinary life experience, but that there are two modes of discourse. We speak of religious experience in different terms from those used of ordinary life experience. For religious experience we have to use symbolic language. "It can take many forms, including dance and music, art and architecture. Perhaps the most important form is simply behaviour patterns of

everyday life. In its verbal form it is myth ...." "Myth can, and frequently does, employ significant experiences to describe reality, but it is not concerned, in the first place to explain those significant experiences, but to describe the total reality to which humankind would relate."[12]

Of the case studies, Churchill and Einstein became almost mythological in people's eyes, Leonardo, Rembrandt and Bach brought understanding of mythical backgrounds closer to men and women, and Picasso deliberately created and fostered myth about himself.

There is a sort of circularity in communicating religious or, perhaps, any experience beyond the merely factual, in language that is intelligible to a wide variety of people. Whatever the status or condition of people there is engagement with life, and the assessment of experience which learns of goals, doing better, producing better, living better, inside and out. It is this development of precision and ubiquity in symbolic discourse as the struggle for expression proceeds, that Cumpsty considers the identifying process of the "Tradition Community".[13]

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[12] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 10, p.257.

[13] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 13, p.413.

Impressions, awarenesses register on the person through the five senses, and the cognitive and affective faculties test the information and memory stores what is attractive. Cumpsty argues against the presence of a sixth sense, or some special faculty.[14] Somehow, from the source material of incoming impressions, the human being selects the information which is germane to himself or herself. Those who integrate their experiences intelligently and are sufficiently enriched to communicate them do so, occasionally at levels which are nearly universal. Then, whoever wishes to may seek to understand more of life and life-experience drawing on the communications of those who have gone before, in order to enrich their own mode of engagement and quest. This is the very *raison d'etre* of those traditional elements which are included an any one human being.

We do not only participate in one tradition community, for what is comfortable for one is not necessarily compatible with all. Each person so motivated will turn to those whose language and interpretations suit them the best or which they understand most readily. But in every walk of life, from stark survival, or a farmer needing to know more about the weather or seeds, a saint at his prayers, or Einstein grappling with his Unified Field Theory, there is the desire to understand, to engage with life

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[14] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 2, p.53.

better, and that understanding must necessarily engage with the individual's total life experience. If that is to come to conceptualization and expression it requires a precise symbolic language.

Myth, being the tradition community's distillation of total experience, should lift its adherents out of swings from undue optimism to undue despair and back, but to have authority for ordinary folk it must reflect a reasonably contemporary experience. Myth may be re-mythologised but not de-mythologised. For example, the myth regarding women, her place in society and her function, has radically changed this century. Nowadays, the role of women in the 18th and 19th centuries provokes horror and consternation. Cumpsty makes reference to Teilhard de Chardin and Karl Marx's attempt to provide myth for a dynamic reality rather than one in which reality resides in permanence.[15] This change in cultural attitude is often portrayed in Picasso's work. He, of course, ruled his own women with a rod of iron, and his depictions of the new feminist myth are less than flattering. Picasso painted the myth of our time, the violence, the fragmentations, distortions, destructions, obsessions with sex and aging. Picasso plays with relativity, time and space, communism, domination, and tyranny. His work, as myth, is, as

[15] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 4, p.85.

yet, too direct a reflection of this immediate century.

Indeed, we do live in a world in which there seems to be no permanence. There is no structure in society that we can suppose to be permanent. Einstein himself changed Western cultural myth radically when he removed the absolute quality of time. He and Marx and Freud were instrumental in diminishing the quality of necessity of God. In America the myth of the individual grows and grows. In Africa the myth of freedom is paramount, with not much reference to the definition of what it is. Hopefully the myth (and art) of the next century will be gentler, kinder, more forgiving, more tolerant.

IDENTITY - THE ULTIMATELY-REAL

The felt sense of reality, Cumpsty says, is the individual's distilled estimate of the reality in his or her world- out-there.[16] Whether it remains affective or becomes paradigmatic or returns to the affective in a post-paradigmatic cosmic trust, it is the frame within which identity is constructed. The details of identity, however, are drawn from relation with the real.

It is sometimes said that behind what is known of the self lies a

[16] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 8, p.172.

center of pure consciousness spoken of as "the witness", which has no content of its own but enables us to stand outside everything that is consciously ours, even our most intimate traits, and view them from without.[17]

Cumpsty has argued that there is no such thing as pure consciousness in the sense of an empty consciousness, but that it must include at least the memory of being pressed toward active engagement with all-that-out-there. Active engagement includes a mode of engagement at least and that implies one of the paradigms for the reality with which we are engaging.[18]

In spite of the elusiveness of this "witness", there are moments in the lives of the case studies where it is possible to identify it at work. Without the ingredient of the witness, a person cannot become integrated, or coherent as a person in his own right. He remains a sum of parts.

IDENTITY - AGGREGATIONS

A society, perhaps, may be given limits, not so a culture. People belong to many different groupings which go towards making a

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[17] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 11, p.333.

[18] Cumpsty, J. "Religion and Consciousness: A Pointer to Qualitative Method in the Social Sciences" in ??? (Pretoria HSRC, 1994.)

composite whole, both below and above the level of what might be thought of as a culture. Cumpsty's examples range from siblings or peers to family and community, through nation to "free world", humanity and the natural order. Cumpsty calls these conceived groupings to which people understand themselves to belong and whose values they espouse, "aggregations." These aggregations influence the identities of individuals who share the corporate identity of the conceived groupings with which they ally themselves. In turn, the individual's concern ensures the continuance of whatever actual grouping the aggregation may be associated with. They may be as structured and clearly related to an institution as "the regiment" or "the corporation" or as unstructured as "academia", or comprising little more than the values themselves, as "liberal". Thus, says Cumpsty, an individual might identify himself by saying "I am an Israeli, a teenager, a radical, an academic" and embrace the value systems of each of those aggregations.[19]

"Part of individual identity will always be idiosyncratic and beyond my present concern, much of it, however, will be formed by participation in these corporate identities.[20]

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[19] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 11, p.323ff.

[20] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 11, p.320.

Religion is concerned with the individual's participation in reality, says Cumpsty. Identity depends on how that participation has shaped one. Self-image (the conscious aspect of identity) depends on how one perceives that participation.[21]

Mature identity cannot be independent of values. Even the "facts" of experience will be meaningful to some while to others they will be irrelevant and be discarded. Values, if they are to be more than arbitrary, must be set in the widest possible context.

The case studies, it will be seen, had no doubt that they were something more than the sum of their environments, their trainings, their labels, and their professions, etc. They were in charge of themselves and their aggregations (whatever they may have been) were securely integrated. For example, Churchill's most important aggregation was being an Englishman. His spiritual home was the House of Commons, uniquely English.

An integrated person has learned to live with what he is, both affectively and cognitively, even if he doesn't like what it. He knows when to take hold and shape and when to leave well alone. An integrated person is not constantly at war with life, proving things or trying to rationalize many values and points of view.

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[21] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 11, p.312.

Neither is it a tame fatalism. On the contrary, their modes of engagement are balanced, effective, rewarding, useful and fruitful.

The case studies are such men, with the added value of a great gift or gifts, which they use for the benefit of mankind. They develop and use their talents to the full, but always they use their gifts, the gifts do not use them, or become an end in themselves. Even Picasso dominated his own phenomenal creativity absolutely.

RITUAL

The function of ritual, says Cumpsty, is to unite the self to the ultimately-real, and to unite the real to the ultimately-real for the self. Its secondary functions, when an instrument of worship, are to teach adherents about the Ultimately-Real, to refine the sense of self, to unite the tradition community.[22]

The drive to overcome the sense of ultimate alienation, or to prevent it occurring, is basic to religion and this, in most people, calls for ritual. It calls too for a mode of engagement which includes disciplined efforts to understand intuitionally and intellectually.

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[22] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 11, p.334.

Historically, the felt sense of reality in all peoples has demanded ritual to mark events and happenings of importance. Rites of passage, commemorations, victories, appeasements or atonements, seasonal cycles, all need the recognition that ritual provides to sanction or legitimate them. Even those peoples without overt religion, parade with strong state-allegiance, and are ritualistic in their public gatherings and celebrations. Parliaments and their equivalents throughout the world observe rituals. Ritual is used by peoples to prevent a general degeneration into chaos.

Rembrandt, in a number of his works, portrays the importance of ritual in paint. "The Presentation of Christ in the Temple," "Christ and the Woman taken in Adultery," "Jacob blessing the Sons of Joseph," "The Conspiracy of Julius Civilis," "Isaac and Rebecca, or the Jewish Bride," are a few which spring to mind. They bring the people concerned and the rituals face to face, and the gravity of the events is reinforced in the eyes of God and man.

The personal rituals of the case studies assumes importance, in that they are able, almost upon demand, to focus themselves. When they are so focussed, they can express themselves in

universal language. They did not live continuously in these states, however, and descended quite naturally to a normal plane for normal existence. These creative states were not drug-induced, except for Picasso between 1904 and 1908.

In order to marry the information gleaned from the case studies with the above, we will ask certain questions of each person studied. The answers to each case study are contained in the parts labelled "Conclusion," which follow the texts. As they vary as the balance in each character varies, the phrases underlined here will appear in italics, and the questions will be numbered at the end of each answer for ease of reference. The three general questions are:
"How did he relate to the religious culture of his time?", and
"What did he do about his relation to the religious culture (a) for himself and (b) for his contemporaries?" and "What motivated (drove) him?".

Specifically, we will be asking of the people studied:
[1.i.] What is the evidence of their being "bigger" than the religious expressions of their own culture, that is, as having talents which enabled a more "expanding" experience and therefore needing symbols less confining in which to conceptualize their sense of reality and to communicate it to others.

[2.i] Shaping Experience or Context

[2.i.i] Was there anything else in their background (given their talents) that drove them to excel as they did? [If expectations were external and real they would be included here, if more perceived or personal they would be included in the next item]

[2.ii] Identity.

[2.ii.i] Was there something about their identity (other than talents and experience) that drove them to excel in the manner that they did?

[2.ii.ii] Did they take on any particular perspective or ideological stance toward events that "coloured" their experience?

[2.ii.iii] Did they have a strongly corporate sense that encouraged them to function within the beliefs and symbols of their contemporaries or were they driven to be individual?

3. What did they do about their relation to the religious culture for themselves and for their contemporaries?

[3.i] Did they seem to have a cosmic trust, that "the whole" was trustworthy, and that they belonged to it?

[3.ii] If there was cosmic trust, what form did it take? Was it conceptualized? If so, did it they use the symbols of their

cultures or did it need or seek to go beyond those symbols?

[3.iii] If there was no conceptualization of a total reality what controlled their mode of engagement with the All-that-out-there?

4. Did their mode of engagement with all-that-out-there leave them with any blind spots?

Finally, we will be testing, perhaps refining, the theoretical understanding which gave rise to the project and upon which the analysis is based, that is John Cumpsty's theory of Religion as Belonging, which provides the main theoretical framework.

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CHAPTER TWO

LEONARDO DA VINCI

INTRODUCTION TO ESSAY ON LEONARDO DA VINCI

CONTEMPORARY BACKGROUND IN ITALY

PARTS I, II & III

CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was a world unto itself. Geographically and climatically it was central and mild and beautiful. It was also fertile. She had a unique past, a unique capital, a song-like language. And she was urbanized.

The Italian city-states were becoming increasingly wealthy during this time. In Florence and Venice, both republics, the banking industry was established and very profitable. Wool, salt, silk were the bases of substantial fortunes. Milan, Mantua, Ferrara, Sienna, Naples were "tyrannies", city-states ruled by hereditary families, each having its princes, courts, ambassadors. Rome and her Papal States were ruled by the popes, who were equally efficient at acquiring and protecting wealth. Florence, Venice and Genoa were republics, the latter two with sea access and shipping industries. Money-making stood at the centre of the successful city states, an end in itself and the "strongest mode of expression of the will-to-power."

The growth of the urban city-states was most important to the Italian Renaissance. Those who could afford it (and they all did their best to afford it) developed courts, and it was a

point of honour with these courts to be as brilliant as possible. Their sophistication developed in leaps and bounds. Throughout Italy, discernment in philosophy and artistic ability became important to the nobility. Urbino, Milan, Naples, Mantua wished to attract artists, philosophers, engineers, courtiers of the highest calibre. The elegant life blossomed, cosmetics, cuisine, new fruits and vegetables, upholstered furniture, rich fabrics, two horse carriages - which meant that carriages became lighter, smaller and faster - became popular. Elegant and comfortable living became the criterion.

Only the richest cities built towering Gothic-type cathedrals, new churches were designed man-sized. Palazzos became small, light, airy and comfortable. They built beautifully proportioned houses, courtyards for recreation, wonderful formal gardens, which all contributed to the improved Italian life-style.

Culturally, Europe had emerged from the Middle Ages, and was being re-born - the Renaissance, in fact. Pivotal in this massive change stands Dante Alighieri, who died in 1398. Some call him the last Medieval poet, others call him the first Renaissance man. Whichever he was, he reflects directly the fundamental changes which took place in Europe at this time.

Firstly, he wrote in the Italian vernacular, and not in Latin. Two hundred years before Shakespeare formalized the English language, Dante had performed the same service for Italian. His Divine Comedy is structured on medieval philosophy, with its concepts of Paradise, Purgatory and Hell, and the imagery derives directly from the Middle Ages, but it is one of the first works ever to list particular people, and place them in a critical light. Few of the great artists of the Middle Ages are known by name. We do not know who designed the great Gothic cathedrals, who carved their magnificent sculptures, who wrote their plainsong, who painted their altarpieces, who designed and executed their stained glass, or who jewelled their reliquaries. It was done for the glory of God, the artist was unimportant. Dante brought identity to the forefront. He is taken on his tour of Hell and Purgatory by Virgil, a pagan poet, (the Renaissance was to revive antique literature) and Beatrice, a woman for whom he has courtly love (a Medieval concept) takes him around Paradise. There are many such comparisons to be found in the Commedia.

Politically, the city-states were separate from each other. Renaissance Italy, as seen from the standpoint of the national politician, is a sorry sight. They fought internally, battles and vendettas were a part of the culture. It was fashionable for

powerful families to hire condottiere, or professional soldiers. New rich and powerful people married into the old aristocracy, for example the Medici were a "new" family of shrewd and wealthy Florentine bankers (they became bankers after they had made a fortune out of salt and wool), and the Sforzas of Milan were originally very efficient condottiere. The "First Citizens" of the "new" courts based their power on money and political acuteness.

The Crusaders, heavily encouraged by the Popes in Rome, had successfully looted the Middle East. Constantinople was sacked in 1453, the year of Leonardo da Vinci's birth. Manuscripts, books, works of art, relics were acquired during and after the Crusades, and these greatly influenced the springs of new thought in Italy. The philosophies of Ancient Greece, whose authors were either translated from the original Greek, or re-translated from Arabic, became extremely fashionable. Many of Plato's works were read for the first time - the Middle Ages had access to Aristotle's work, but very little Plato.

Economies functioned under a system of patronage. Work was commissioned by the churches - the biggest patron of all was the Vatican - and the courts, whether they were "republics" or principalities. Goldsmiths, painters, sculptors, musicians, poets and pageant-wrights, condottiere, engineers, courtiers, as

well as shoemakers and farmers all operated under this system. The condottiere were interesting, for whom war was not a romantic ideal or patriotic duty, but a working profession. A good condottiere sold his fighting skills to the highest bidder - he supplied battles as a shoemaker supplies shoes or a painter portraits. He had no concern whatever with his patron's politics or morals.

Man became the measure of all things, and individuality developed. Religion in daily life changed radically. Burckhardt writes in *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*:

> "The belief in God at earlier times had its source and chief support in Christianity and the outward symbol of Christianity, the Church. ..... But history does not record a heavier responsibility than that which rests upon the decaying church. She set up as absolute truth, and by the most violent means, a doctrine which she had distorted to serve her own aggrandizement. Save in the sense of her inviolability, she abandoned herself to the most scandalous profligacy, and, in order to maintain herself in this state, she levelled mortal blows against the conscience and the intellect of nations, and drove multitudes of the noblest spirits, whom she had inwardly estranged, into the arms of unbelief and despair."[1]

This is very strong language, but the Church was undoubtedly in a parlous condition. Friedell is able to add an overall comment

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[1] Jacob Burckhardt: 1945, P. 280.

of insight:

> The Italian Renaissance was an era of anarchy as regards its intellectual constitution, an era which no longer believed and had not arrived at knowing. And yet we have the feeling that life in those days must have been beautiful, rich, and vigorous.[2]

The humanism at the Italian courts took practical form as the natural alliance between the tyrant or despot and the artists, craftsmen, scholars, etc. each relying on personal talent. The princely courts paid better than the free cities, and this was an important point. Leonardo's and Michelangelo's notes and letters are very often concerned with money. The Church was run by successive popes on much the same lines as the city-states, with much the same taste for art, learning and comfort. Most of her income came from indulgences, and levies for legitimacy, that is, she would sanction tyrants as being appointed by God for large and continuing sums. These were spent at the discretion of the Pope and Curia. As far as ideas went, there was little concern about heresy in general. Savaronola, the Dominican Prior of San Marco, was burnt at the stake in Florence in 1521, by Alexander IV's orders. He had been preaching against the rampant decadence invading the church. Alexander IV had offered him a Cardinal's hat for free, an enormous bribe in those days,

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[2] Egon Friedell: 1936, P.151.

to persuade him to change his views. When Savaronola refused this immense offer he was tried, convicted and burnt.

Pope Nicholas V (1447-1455) was confident of the future of the Church, since thousands of learned men supported her. Pope Pius II (1458-64) controlled the humanism to a much greater degree, retained the personal leadership of the Church, and "enjoyed his position without the least misgiving".[3] Pope Paul II (1464-1471) was the first to dread and mistrust the culture of his secretaries, and his three successors, Sixtus, Innocent, and Alexander, accepted dedications and permitted their praises to be sung (there even existed a "Borgiad", probably in hexameters) while seeking extensions to their wealth and power. Pope Julius II readily found poets to eulogize him - he was no mean subject for poetry and adulation. He was one of the most warlike of the popes, riding into battles at the head of his troops until he was too old. Michelangelo worked hard for Julius. He was followed by Leo X, the most Platonic of the lot, who enjoyed elegant Latin prose and melodious verse, filled with the whole population of Olympus! Enjoyment was the order of the day, and poets had direct and unlimited access to Pope Leo. He was extolled interminably, and in spite of the lack of important events during his reign, he maintained the most brilliant court. He was the Pope who granted permission to print a translation of the newly-

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[3] Jacob Burckhardt: 1945, P. 133.

found Tacitus. The Pope became Pontifex Maximus, cardinals were senators, nuns vestal virgins, rooms were named for the Zodiacal signs. It was a bizarre fashion. Burckhardt maintains that Leo X is responsible for any humanism remaining today. Leo X is the only Pope for whom Leonardo worked. His rule was called a golden age, because it was the admired focus of European culture. Until the advent of humanism, an individual was obedient to the church or he faced execution, or ex-communication, a terrifying prospect in the Middle Ages.

The historian Guicciardini says, in 1529:

> "No man is more disgusted than I am with the ambition, the avarice, and the profligacy of the priests, not only because each of these vices is hateful in itself, but because each and all of them are most unbecoming in those who declare themselves to be men in special relations with God, and also because they are vices so opposed to one another, that they can only co-exist in very singular natures. Nevertheless, my position at the Court of several Popes forced me to desire their greatness for the sake of my own interest. But, had it not been for this, I should have loved Martin Luther as myself, not in order to free myself from the laws which Christianity, as generally understood and explained, lays upon us, but in order to see this swarm of scoundrels (questa caterva di scelerati) put back into their proper place, so that they may be forced to live either without vices or without power."

However, the faith which moves mountains, then common among the followers of Savonarola, is mentioned by Guicciardini as a curious fact. This thought, that faith has nothing to do with every day life, that it is somehow an illogical luxury, is very

much a Renaissance ethos. Leonardo is in this sense is the product of his time.

The Italian mind never went further than the denial of the old hierarchy, while the origin and the vigour of the German Reformation was due to its positive religious doctrines, most of all to the doctrines of justification by faith and of the inefficacy of good works. The influence of antiquity was unfavourable because they substituted the cult of historical greatness for the Christian ideal of life.

The Platonic Academy at Florence deliberately chose for its object the reconciliation of the spirit of antiquity with that of Christianity, and biblical scholars wanted to reconcile the new Humanism with Christianity.

The Italian courts of the time placed great emphasis on courtly behaviour, philosophical discussion, fine art, sculpture and music, and the more brilliant the court, the more attractive it was to be a member of it. The principal Duke or Prince of these courts took pride in having attached to them the most brilliant minds of the day, so it was a two way arrangement. A good courtier was valuable to the Prince, and the Prince patronized the good courtier. The qualities of the complete and perfect

courtier were "discretion and decorum, nonchalance and gracefulness". This was said by Baldesar Castiglione, who wrote "The Book of the Courtier", imaginary conversations which took place at the court of Urbino in 1507. Raphael was his good friend and fellow courtier.

Humanists, or the "philosophers" of the day, were most respected men of their time. Everyone competed for their services and their company, they were very much the ideal courtiers. Socially they were placed far higher than the artists of form, which is curious, seeing that it was in the latter that all the creative force of the Renaissance was exclusively concentrated.... Vasari in his "lives" described himself expressly as a painter, he was consciously performing a gesture of exquisite courtesy towards his colleagues, whose attention he thereby drew to the flattering circumstance of an author's having risen from their ranks. Alberti advised artists to form friendships with poets and rhetoricians, because these would provide them with material.

And so to the rise of the individual. Names appear more and more often, in letters, speeches, biographies, memoirs, portraits, medallions. Ethics were changing rapidly and radically, and this left a moral vacuum, not always happily filled. The old-fashioned Christian value system was ignored, and no longer fitted with

the Renaissance Italian. Burckhardt explains how he coped with it in terms of honour:

> "Let us begin by saying a few words about that moral force which was then the strongest bulwark against evil. The highly gifted man of that day thought to find it in the sentiment of Honour. This is that enigmatic mixture of conscience and egotism which often survives in the modern man after he has lost, whether by his own fault or not, faith, love, and hope. This sense of honour is compatible with much selfishness and great vices, and may be the victim of astonishing illusions; yet, nevertheless, all the noble elements that are left in the wreck of a character may gather around it, and from this fountain may draw new strength.....
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> It is certainly not easy, in treating of the Italian of this period, to distinguish this sense of honour from the passion for fame, into which, indeed, it easily passes. Yet the two sentiments are essentially different judging of the morality of the more highly developed Italian of this period, is that of the imagination. It gives to his virtues and vices a peculiar colour, and under its influence his unbridled egotism shows itself in its most terrible shape." [4]

Guicciardini says in his "Aphorisms": "He who esteems honour highly succeeds in all that he undertakes, since he fears neither trouble, danger, nor expense; I have found it so in my own case, and may say it and write it; vain and dead are the deeds of man which have not this as their motive."

Burckhardt says imagination of future wealth, enjoyment, fame,

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4 Jacob Burckhardt: 1945, P. 263.

made the Italian hazard everything to achieve them. i.e. he was an inveterate gambler. It also coloured his idea of vengeance. Revenge was a matter of honour and of duty, and where it became a passion it was planned and executed with dedication and imagination - which kept the picture of wrong alive with frightful vividness. Vengeance was a matter of honour in all social stratas, in fact this "moral" could burst into full scale vendettas, and is still seen today in the form of Mafia-type organizations.

Dante, Machiavelli, and Guiccardini were all troubled with this concept of honour and individualism. As individuals they were outspoken against their city, in these cases Florence, and in doing so they were exiled and accused of treason. But their honour forbade them be anything but Florentines, however long and unjust the separation was. Leonardo too, although his exile was self-imposed, retained his loyalty to Florence throughout his life. One's citizenship was a matter of honour, even if the State is (in some cases) tyrannical and illegitimate. "In the face of all objective facts, of laws and restraints of whatever kind, he retains the feeling of his own sovereignty, and in each single instance forms his decision independently, according as honour or interest, passion or calculation, revenge or

renunciation, gain the upper hand in his own mind."[5]

Those who wished to excel, must do so in several disciplines. A man must be courtier, wit, musician, artist, poet, philosopher, athlete, (to name a few) to call himself educated. This "universality" made Italy's courts peculiarly rich and splendid. "... for Humanity was then sufficiently ripe to achieve the mastery in all things, and yet not old enough to have reached the sobering and paralysing belief that life is only long enough to achieve mastery in ONE thing. Far from this, the Renaissance ideal was the UOMO UNIVERSALE. A prominent humanist would be philologist and historian, theologian and jurist, astronomer and actor all in one. And not only all the great artists, but many small artists as well, were at once painters, sculptors, and architects, and often highly gifted poets and musicians, acute scholars, and diplomats into the bargain. Human talent was not yet forced into special channels, but flowed beneficently as one free stream over all fields. We, on the contrary, came into the world with brains ready pigeon-holed, as it were..... .. But it is in the very nature of the true artist to be open to all impressions, have access to all forms of existence, possess in fact an encyclopedic soul. In any period of artistic culture we find, therefore that its gifted men are all distinguished by high

[5] Jacob Burckhardt: 1945, P. 279.

versatility. They engage in everything and can do every thing. In Greece a man who wished to be considered prominent was obliged to stand out in practically every department: as a musician or an orator, and equally as a general and a boxer. The specialist was positively despised as a common fellow (banausos); and in the Renaissance, talent, virtu, was in the fullest degree identical with many-sidedness. It is only in degenerate cultures that the specialist appears."[6]

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[6] Egon Friedell: 1936, P. 166.

LEONARDO DA VINCI

PART I

Leonardo da Vinci was born in 1452, at Vinci, Tuscany, Italy, where his father was the lawyer. He was illegitimate, of very healthy stock, and what formal education he absorbed during his childhood was in his father's house. Being born out of wedlock separated him from the step-brothers and sisters he had later, and he felt no obligation towards them. While his illegitimacy never appears to have bothered him, there was little exchange with his family. Certainly after Leonardo's death, his heir Melzi wrote to them explaining the will and making it crystal clear that they had no claim on Leonardo's estate whatsoever.

He spent a great deal of time roaming the countryside, and it became apparent that his powers of observation were outstanding. He sketched and drew what he saw, and on the strength of these drawings Verrochio, a Florentine who ran a school of painting, took him on as an apprentice at the age of 14. Leonardo later regretted his lack of Latin.

In 1476, a case of "bad relations" was brought against him and

three others. The case was never heard, but for three years it hung over Leonardo's head. He stayed in Florence until about 1482, then moved to Milan to work for Ludovico Sforza, as chief engineer as well as artist. In 1499 Leonardo fled when Ludovico Sforza lost Milan to the French, visiting Mantua, Venice, and returning to Florence in April, 1500. He worked for Cesare Borgia, the Borgia Pope's son, as military engineer for the period 1502/3. He returned to Florence in 1507, was seconded to Milan - now under the auspices of Charles d'Amboise of France, and was next found working in Rome and making frequent journeys all over Italy. In 1516 he went to France, at the express invitation of King Francois I. Leonardo's will was signed on 23rd April, 1519, and he died at the chateau of Cloux on 2nd May, 1519.

When Leonardo was young, he conceived of painting as the noblest calling open to mankind and embarked upon training his considerable gifts at Verrochio's studio. To the end of his life he called himself "painter", but he was very much more than that. He excelled in botany, anatomy, cartography, mechanics, maths and geometry, artillery, hydraulics, designs and inventions, and the Francois I enjoyed his philosophy. It is probable that he was unaware of how gifted he was until he rubbed shoulders with people of his own age. He became fascinated

with the spirit at work beneath the world of nature and it's appearance. As well as an artist's sensitivity he had an insatiable desire for knowledge, and he began to analyze the objects he drew and then wondered how everything functioned. He was a genius at applying invented principles in new arenas, for example Archimedes screw, used mainly for pumping water, was adapted by Leonardo for many original functions. He observed his subjects minutely, trying to discern what forces or experience had shaped them just so - faces, bodies, rocks, plants, water, machines, all was grist to his mill. In turn he applied his observations to other uses, leading to the invention of an astonishing number of original designs. He was a civil and military engineer whose inventions embodied many of the principles of modern machinery. He started keeping Notebooks of all that caught his attention - a practice he continued throughout his life. His mental adventures are one of the best documented in history.

Leonardo's personal drive was for creative power. He wanted to penetrate the secrets of nature so that he could understand and create for himself. He was the precursor of a new age in scientific observation. He strove for perfect observation, and he wanted what he made to function as near perfectly as possible.

In his time, there was no separation between the disciplines of the arts and sciences. Leonardo was one of the most universal of the Universal Men. There were no professional scientists working by experiment - natural phenomena were observed under Aristotelian criteria, which authorized creed was accepted by the Schoolmen, who deprecated experimental methods as subversive and "unlettered". But as an independent artist, Leonardo's gifts were unfettered by customary education, and he was largely governed by his phenomenal visual experience, together with a deeply enquiring mind. And he evolved his own methodology, which included repeated controlled experiments, and careful and detached observations of phenomena. He did not claim to be a man of letters, nor well versed in classical literature like most authors of his time. "I have no book learning, I cannot properly express what I desire to treat of - but they do not know that my subjects require for their exposition experience rather than the words of others. Experience has been the mistress of whoever has written well; and so as mistress I will cite her in all cases. [C.A. 119v]."[1] He owned books on mathematics, warfare, natural history (Pliny), agriculture, Albertus Magnus on Aristotelian philosophy and science, astronomy, health, chiromancy. Apart from the Epistles of Ovid, he owned no classical literature.

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[1] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 1/2.

Leonardo was not an abstract theorist intent on establishing a logical system, nor a modern scientist concentrating on a special line of research. He grounded his natural science on an acceptance of the philosophic system, inherited from Greek and Medieval (Albertus Magnus and Aristotle) thought, which conceived of the universe as an organized cosmos, a supreme work of art created by the Ultimate Creator. Inside an all-inclusive sphere four elements had concentric regions assigned to them. Earth occupied the centre. Surrounding it was water; then came a layer of air; and then enveloping the whole, fire. These four elements did not remain at rest in their own realms, but were constantly shaken and thrown into neighbouring fields; it was their nature to drift back to where they belonged - to return to their own kind. Nature abhorred a vacuum. On the whole, Leonardo accepted this ancient tradition of the Universe with Earth at the centre, and worked from there, in spite of the fact that in his notes there is a sentence written large: THE SUN DOES NOT MOVE. He studied the activities of Nature, and accepted or rejected theories by the criteria of his strictly empirical and experimental methods. In the final analysis it was his own affective judgement which informed him whether his ideas felt true or not.

He profited thereby, having a framework into which he could logically fit his work - that of a Grand Designer whose designs could be penetrated. He was aware of the enormous power of natural forces, for example those of water and the Sun, and trenchantly critical of the inherent arrogance and wickedness of man. Gradually his attitude towards the world became that of a strangely aloof and impersonal observer, detached and self-contained. He became almost secretive and solitary.

Most people who study Leonardo describe him as "enigmatic", "cloudy", as disappearing behind his own rules of light and shade. "The colossal outlines of Leonardo's nature can never be more than dimly and distantly conceived." says Burkhardt.[2] Friedell says that his "paintings are also sheer puzzle-pictures which seem to point behind and beyond themselves. A strange ghostly emptiness lies over them: not a hollow emptiness, but the emptiness of infinity."[3]

The only mention of women in his notes is the name and whereabouts of someone he wanted to draw, and a list of funeral expenses which are most likely those of his natural mother.

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[2] Burckhardt, The Renaissance, P. 87.

[3] Egon Friedell, Cultural History of the Modern World, 1936, P. 187.

Kenneth Clark says: "In all his writings - one of the most voluminous and complete records of a mind at work which has come down to us - there is hardly a trace of human emotion. Of his affections, his tastes, his health, his opinions on current events we know nothing."[4] There are one or two references to him by contemporaries, from which we learn that he loved animals, birds particularly, that he was probably vegetarian, and abhorred the wanton destruction of forests. For his time, his ideas on ecology were astonishingly advanced.

He was careful, even in his Notebooks, to make no reference to any of the major disputes of his day - political, philosophical, religious, moral. Like Einstein, when compared to the importance of his work, they were trivial. Though highly critical of the priesthood, he did not comment on the Church itself. His lack of involvement in religious matters was such that it caused Vasari (his first biographer) to label him an atheist. For example, the monk Savonarola preached persistently against the heresy and witchcraft of the Platonic Medicean circle, the tyrannical rulers, the corrupt clergy. When he was burnt at the stake in Florence's main square in 1498, Leonardo is quite silent. Neither does he comment on the Platonic Academy in

[4] Kenneth Clark, Leonardo, 1959, P. 159.

Florence which was fully patronized by Lorenzo the Magnificent and run by Marsilio Ficino. It must be remembered that Leo X was a Medici pope, with a pronounced taste for Bacchanalia, a Florentine Pope carefully trained in Platonic humanism. Leonardo worked for his brother, Guiliano de Medici, from 1513 to 1516. Francis Melzi, Leonardo's heir, corrected Vasari's impression before his second edition was printed. The correction was partial. Leonardo was neither a constitutional Christian, nor did he favour the overt Platonic ideas so popular at the time. As he did not allow the Church to influence him, so the Platonic fashion did not overwhelm him. He was independent in philosophy and methods.

In his second edition Vasari says:

> "He possessed great strength and dexterity; he was a man of regal spirit and tremendous breadth of mind; and his name became so famous that not only was he esteemed during his lifetime but his reputation endured and became even greater after his death."[5]

Vasari tells us of his physical beauty, his mathematical ability, his music, as well as his drawing and engineering skills, and goes on to say:

"Leonardo's disposition was so lovable that he

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[5] Vasari's Lives, Penguin Edition, P.255.

commanded everyone's affection."[6]

(with the exception of Michelangelo, who found Leonardo insufferable) and:

"Leonardo was very proud and instinctively generous."[7]

He was generous when he could be. However, he would only sell his own work. He was reliant on patronage, and indeed, was financially embarrassed when the Duke of Milan did not pay him his salary for nearly a year. Michelangelo also had this trouble, (particularly when working on the Sistine Chapel for Pope Julius II) the wages of artists of those days were low on the list of financial priorities. For both men, money was a worry and concern through the years.

Otherwise, his curiosity was insatiable. Everything which caught his attention was noted or sketched. And despite lack of direct comment on religious matters, his religious paintings are profoundly Biblically and symbolically informed. Leonardo bent his considerable mind to developing his universal powers to the full. His early drawings display brilliant spontaneity and emotional content, which diminishes dramatically after an accusation of sodomy, or "bad relations". Kenneth Clark points

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[6] Vasari's Lives, Penguin Edition, P. 257.

[7] Vasari's Lives, Penguin Edition P. 268.

out that Leonardo when young was "deeply, even extravagantly romantic", to the point of being a forerunner of the Baroque styles of the 17th century, but later on became very scientific in his approach to painting, forming the foundation for academicism. He did not lose the aesthetic approach, and Clark says this is one of the conflicts in his nature.[8] The spontaneity is controlled in his later drawings, and the emotional content re-appears in ideal form. There is a progression between the aesthetic voluptuousness of Leonardo's artwork and the austere scientist of his Notebooks.

Leonardo strove mightily to represent ideal emotions like true compassion, perfect motherhood, or true portraits of the apostles as types. The self-portrait in Turin when he was sixty years old is that of an ideal old man, wise, healthy and beautiful. It is in this area that he was Platonic, and it is a measure of his achievement that people like Burkhardt, Friedell and Clark call him "cloudy", "pointing beyond", or lacking in human emotion. He seems to have tried to erase all personal elements from body of work. He looked out, not in.

Apart from the realm of the perfect and ideal in Plato's Doctrine of Ideas, Leonardo had no sympathy with the denial of the

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[8] Kenneth Clark, Leonardo da Vinci, 1959, P. 159.

evidences of the senses, and that reality was a non-permanent reflection of abstract ideas. On the contrary, he maintained throughout his life that Experience, which necessarily came through the senses, was the only way to know true reality. Thus, beauty, compassion, motherhood, souls, bodies, plants, etc. could be perfect in conception, but only may be in execution. Leonardo did not expect to find perfection practically manifest, but he certainly used his colossal abilities to try and conceive what it was like, using mind and senses. Leonardo's senses fed his mind and soul. "How the sense waits on the soul, and not the soul on the sense and how, where the sense that should minister to the soul is lacking, the soul in such a life lacks conception of the function of this sense, as is seen in the case of a mute or one born blind. [W. 19019.]" Leonardo's "soul" has connotations of Cumpsty's "witness". "The senses are of the earth; reason stands apart from them in contemplation. [Triv. 33r].", noted Leonardo.
And the soul, he could have said, stands over both senses and reason in discrimination.
He said later in his Treatise on Art, the painter needs to be universal:
"It may be frankly admitted that certain people deceive themselves who call a painter a "good master" who can only do the head or the figure well. Surely it is no great achievement if

Pl.22 *Adoration of the Magi* (1481), Florence, Uffizi

after studying one thing only during his whole lifetime he attain to some perfection. But since we know that painting embraces and contains within itself all things which nature produces, or which result from the fortuitous actions of man, and in short whatever can be comprehended by the eyes, it would seem to me that he is but a poor master who makes only a single figure well. For do you not see how many and how varied are the actions performed by men alone? Do you not see how many different animals there are, and also trees and plants and flowers? What variety of public and private buildings, instruments fitted for man's use; of divers costumes, ornaments, and arts? All these things should be rendered with equal facility and perfection by whomever you wish to call a good painter." [B.N.2038 25v.][9]

His treatise on Art has the idea that the visual arts were a sort of frozen music. Leonardo says that painting is superior to music and poetry in that the painter uses rhythm and harmony in his figures and composition, he equates proportions with pitch, and says that all the chords are sounded at one time in a painting. A painting is superior to music because its sequences can be apprehended immediately and contemplated indefinitely. Throughout his life his drawings were a direct and accurate and explicit means of expression. He also sees great virtue in the

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[9] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 225.

> proportion it lay at the root of Renaissance aesthetics, for if man was the measure of all things, physically perfect man was surely the measure of all beauty, and his proportions must in some way be reducible to mathematical terms and correspond with those abstract perfections, the square, the circle and the golden section." [11]

Hence we have Leonardo's brilliant drawings of a man framed in a circle and a square, perfectly reduced to perfect proportions.

Leonardo had a profound knowledge of Biblical myth and religious symbolism. Symbolism was highly cultivated in the Renaissance, enabling the informed to read a picture like the written word. It is useful to look at the first version of Leonardo's painting of the *Virgin of the Rocks* in the Louvre in Paris. It was commissioned by the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception, in the 1490s, a centre panel portraying "Our Lady with Her Son". There was a subsequent legal wrangle about it and another version which was supposedly finished in 1508. To illustrate the thought and knowledge that went into this painting Michael Kemp is quoted at length:

> "In the event, Leonardo's painting did not conform to the terms of the contract; he has unexpectedly included St. John and only one of the required "angels". In fact, he has not simply painted a devotional image of the Virgin and Child but illustrated a popular story from the early lives of Christ and John, whose childhoods had long been the sentimental subjects of apocryphal gospels and

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[11] Kenneth Clark: Leonardo, P. 77.

imaginative biographies. One of these tales, popularized in fourteenth-century Italy by Pietro Cavalca, told of a prophetic meeting between Christ and John long before the Baptism. Living precociously as an infant hermit under the tutelage of the Angel Uriel, St. John met Christ during the Holy Family's flight into Egypt - both having evaded Herod's massacre of the innocents. John paid homage to Jesus who in turn blessed his precursor and prophesied the Baptism. The story is embroidered with secondary symbolism in the painting; the foreground pool (as it appears to be) prefigures the Baptism; the sword-shaped leaves of the iris represent the sword of sorrow which was to pierce the Virgin's heart; and the palm leaves are a Marian emblem and symbol of victory as in the *Adoration*. Other similar examples of botanical symbolism can undoubtedly be adduced.

"The novel setting of the scene in front of a rocky grotto may simple be intended to convey an imaginative impression of exotic wildness suitable for John's mountain lair - one story tells how "a mountain cleaved asunder" to shelter him and his mother on their flight - but this would be to read the picture too predominantly as an illustration of the life of St. John, rather than as an image of the Virgin for the Milanese Confraternity. Mary is the supreme figure in this picture, tenderly sheltering the children and knowingly sanctioning their spiritual dialogue. It is thus more satisfactory to see the cleaved rocks as an illustration of yet another metaphor from the Song of Songs, the quarry of Marian imagery especially beloved of Immaculists: "My dove in the clefts of rock [*in foraminibus petrae*], in the cavities of walls [*in caverna maceriae*], reveal your countenance to me" (2.14). The sense of miraculous revelation, as the light picks out the faces of the Virgin and the other protagonists, is precisely in keeping with the spirit of this metaphor.

"Leonardo has orchestrated the relationships between the figures with an almost painful care for narratively explicit gesture. The interlocutor, Uriel, pointedly directs our attention to the Baptist; he kneels devotionally in front of Jesus, receiving a blessing and being drawn into the Holy circle by Mary's embracing arm; her other hand, brilliantly

> foreshortened, hovers over the pointing hand of Uriel, whom we may also notice is lending support for Christ on the rocky ledge above the pool. We are literally meant to read the story, as it weaves its cat's cradle of relationships within the pyramidal space of the group." [12]

The plants and flowers also carry symbolisms, madonna lilies, peace palms, violets for sweetness, oak leaves for strength.

His Treatise on Painting is a practical handbook about how to train and use the faculties, Nature is perceived through the senses, mainly through the sense of sight, so the art of painting is embedded in the process of seeing - *saper videre,* to know how to see - painting should give the impression of a window through which we look out into a section of the visible world. He mastered the science of perspective, which provided a mathematical method of constructing a three-dimensional space, which included any number of individual objects, on to a two-dimensional surface, a method which met not only the requirements of verisimilitude but also those of unification and harmony.

He experimented, to posterity's cost, with pigments, colours, paints, (oil painting was being invented and tried during the 1480s) and surface preparations. Owing to unfortunate chemical mixes, the colours in several of his paintings are thought to

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[12] Michael Kemp: Leonardo da Vinci, Ps. 94-95.

have broken down and darkened. His fresco of the Last Supper in Milan started to deteriorate within 15 years and it was over-painted many times before modern techniques have exposed what was left of Leonardo's original work. And it is so fragile and peeling it is in danger of disappearing altogether. Michelangelo, painting the Sistine chapel, made an infinitely better job of fresco work, which has not needed as much over-painting or repair work over the centuries, and recently has cleaned up magnificently.

The main body of Leonardo's art work was religious in context. Leonardo's authentic paintings are few in number. Some of them are only known by copies which were made of them, some were unfinished, and some have been totally lost. There are very few which have not been altered or over-painted, some to the degree where they are no longer considered Leonardo's work. His Notebooks have been of great value in tracing some of those lost.

His serious painting began with the angel in Verrochio's *Baptism of Christ*, and possibly some of the landscape background. This "exercise" profoundly affected his religious paintings - there would be a divine or angelic figure kneeling or sitting beside flowing waters, very close to the water or on a shallow ledge of rock. He associated Divinity with flowing water, consistent

Pl.14 *The 'Benois Madonna'* (*c.* 1480), Leningrad, Hermitage Museum

with his belief that water was the life force of the world. Then came his first major composition, *The Annunciation*, and after that his unfinished but revolutionary *Adoration of the Magi*, and (also unfinished) *St. Jerome*. In 1501, the Vicar General of the Carmelites described Leonardo's work to Isabelle d'Este:

> He has done one sketch only since he has been in Florence, a cartoon in which Christ is represented as about a year old and as almost leaping from his mother's arms to seize a lamb which he seems to embrace. His mother almost rising from St. Anne's knees takes hold of the Child in order to separate him from the Lamb (a sacrificial creature) which represents the Passion. St. Anne who rises slightly from her seat and seems to restrain her daughter from separating the Child from the Lamb, may represent the Church, who would not that the Passion of Christ were hindered.[13]

This cartoon is now lost, but Leonardo would have seen the religious symbolism as a technical problem of incorporating as many meanings as possible.

It is probable that there were at least three early Madonnas, the *Benois Madonna*, the *Madonna with the Flowers*, and the *Litta Madonna*. There are two *Madonnas of the Rocks*, the one in the National Gallery London, and the other in the Louvre, Paris, which is most likely the earlier version.
The *Benois Madonna* is charming. Mary is showing Jesus a flower.

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[13] Richter: The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci: P.341.

Pl.52 *Last Supper* (*c.* 1495-7), Milan, Refectory of S. Maria delle Grazie

The squint-eyed concentration of the child, grasping the flower to hold it at the optimum distance for viewing, is brilliant. He has understood the total focussed attention of a child mind and body on something new. As well he has caught the cheerful patience of a good mother waiting for a child to finish with one wonder before moving on to the next.

There is the fresco of *The Last Supper* in Milan, which is probably one of the most famous works of art in the world. It can be analyzed advantageously under any criteria - perspective, religious content, emotional portrayals, history painting, composition, it rates very high on all levels. Like Shakespeare's Hamlet - capable of being universally interpreted. Leonardo painted the moment at Supper when Jesus told the Disciples that one of them would betray him, which was totally new. The usual moment illustrated was Christ giving the Sacraments. As one can imagine, in Leonardo's version the Disciples are shocked and bewildered, urgently questioning who it was among them who would betray Jesus. Leonardo has entered into each and every character of the Apostles, he knows their signia and the legends surrounding them. In the composition both Jesus and Judas are isolated, the betrayed and the betrayer, still points in the turbulence surrounding them. It was rumoured that he did not paint Jesus' face in for a long time, because he was

not confident of painting the perfect man. His portrayals of the Disciples' souls were finely executed - one of the most objective works of art in his century.

There is a cartoon and a painting of *The Virgin and Child with St. Anne*, but the cartoon has St. John instead of a lamb. There are two angels which he painted in his last years which are called *St. John*, and *Bacchus in a Landscape*. This last is thought to have been a portrait of St. John the Baptist, patron saint of Florence, but it was so controversial and uncomfortable that it has been altered to represent Bacchus.

The rest of his undisputed paintings consist of four portraits, *Ginevra de'Benci*, *Lady with an Ermine (Cecilia Gallerani)*, *Portrait of a Musician*, and *Mona Lisa*. Finally, there was the *Battle of Anghiari*, lost to Vasari, who over-painted its wall. Fortunately we have the copy Rubens made, so we have an idea of what Leonardo achieved in this work.

His last two paintings, *St John and Bacchus in a Landscape*, are even more enigmatic than ever. The *St. John*, thought by both Clark and Payne to be an angel of annunciation, probably of death, is totally unlike conventional portrayals. He is a beautiful, soft-muscled youth, his smile invites the viewer to

Pl.62 *Cartoon for the Madonna, Child, St Anne (?) and St John* (*c.* 1508), London, National Gallery

take part in who knows what sort of experience, but undoubtedly pleasurable. He points upwards, indicating that the pleasures in store belong to another plane. He is against a very dark undefined background, recalling Leonardo's vision on top of Monte Arosa, where he saw the sunlight reflected by the air particles, or his concept of Nothingness falling in on itself. It is no wonder that the Florentines were disturbed by this picture.

His *Bacchus in a Landscape* has some of the same characteristics- the beautiful man with a more serious smile of invitation, with far more experience than innocence, this time pointing along a path. He is too like the *St. John* to be a coincidence. He is sitting in an ideal landscape, by a flowing river (Leonardo's symbolism) on a bank under some trees. The botanical content is, as ever, superb. The figure is composed so that he forms a directional pattern - leading the viewer's attention from the dark river and pointing to an upward path into the dark, away from the beautifully lit landscape. Originally he was nude, carrying a staff, and was titled *John the Baptist*, until the Seventeenth century when the skin he wears was painted on, the staff was covered with vine leaves and he was re-named. He is much more like Pan than St. John the Baptist. Neither picture arouses feelings of devotion, and yet they are both very intriguing. Enigmatic, as ever.

LEONARDO DA VINCI

PART II

In 1483, Leonardo wrote offering his services to Ludovico Sforza, Duke of Milan. He listed his skills in his letter: Builder of easily transported bridges rendered safe from enemy fire or destruction, drainage of moats together with equipment to ford them, destruction of fortresses (not built on rock), cannon foundry, mortars and armaments, armoury, terrain expert, "covered wagons" to fore-run infantry, and "Item, if necessary, I will build unusual bombards, mortars and light ordnance with beautiful and useful shapes," and lastly, "Whenever the shelling fails, I will invent catapults, mangonels, traps and other unusual and marvelous instruments;...".[1]

As well as weapons expert, he mentioned that he was a water expert, architect, builder, plumber, sculptor in bronze, marble or clay, and painter. The artistic qualifications were noted after the technical skills.[2] The letter gives a good idea of how wide a range of knowledge Leonardo had. He left Florence for Milan in 1484, where he stayed for twenty years.

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[1] Cianchi: Leonardo's Machines: p.18.

[2] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 294

On his arrival, he presented the Duke with a Lyre made in the shape of an ox-head, which he had made himself and played superbly. He was an accomplished musician. In those days, improvisation was much admired. Little or none was written down, so we have no idea of fashionable music.

Ludovico was a successful professional soldier who was now Duke with a castle. "There is a concrete and pragmatic attitude far more pronounced than in Florence; there is less lingering over the beautiful forms, words and images that hide the secrets of the universe, instead all activity is motivated by a logical and physical culture which has its most vital centers in northern Italy and in other European countries near by."[3] Ludovico asked Leonardo to work upon a wide variety of projects - central heating, pageants, cannon founding, decoration of his palace, portraits of two of his mistresses, canal building, which exactly suited Leonardo's desire for varied projects. "Each day," says Vasari, "he made models and drawings for flattening mountains and for tunnelling through them in order to pass from one level to another; and he demonstrated how to lift and draw great weights by means of levers, hoists, winches, and screws, and ways of cleansing harbours and using pumps to suck up water from great

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[3] Cianchi: Leonardo's Machines: p.15.

depths."[4]

Renaissance Italy celebrated important occasions with pageants. This art form suited Leonardo well, it was inventive, quick, and needed music, machines, ideas for themes, costumes, amazing mechanical devices, imaginary creatures, quickly made scenery or floats. He dressed lizards in borrowed plumage and made balloons out of bullocks intestines -

> "Thus he could expand this translucent and airy stuff to fill a large space after occupying only a little, and he compared it to genius (or *virtu*, translator's note)",[5]

and:

If therefore you wish to make one of your imaginary animals appear natural - let us suppose it to be a dragon - take for its head that of a mastiff or setter, for its eyes those of a cat, for its ears those of a porcupine, for its nose that of a greyhound, with the eyebrows of a lion, the temples of an old cock and the neck of a water tortoise. [B.N. 2038 29r.] [6]

The Florentine court was far more critical than that of Milan.

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[4] Vasari: Lives of the Artists: p.256.

[5] Vasari's Lives, Penguin Edition, P. 269.

[6] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 167.

In Milan, it was possible for the effeminacy in Leonardo's art to develop to perceptible proportions. Leonardo's homosexuality can be read in his work, the androgynous types he draws and paints, his foppishness (he was an exquisite in dress).[7] Clark says that in Florence this element in Leonardo's art would have been severely condemned.

When interested in a problem, he would go to considerable lengths to collect material. Richter quotes G.P. Lomazzo:

> "There is a tale told by his servants, that Leonardo once wished to make a picture of some laughing peasants, though he did not carry it out but only drew it. He chose certain men whom he thought appropriate for his purpose, and, after getting acquainted with them, arranged a feast for them with some of his friends. Sitting close to them he then proceeded to tell the maddest and most ridiculous tales imaginable, making them who were unaware of his intentions laugh uproariously. Whereupon he observed all their gestures very attentively and those ridiculous things they were doing, and impressed them on his mind; and after they had left, he retired to his room and there made a perfect drawing which moved those who looked at it to laughter, as if they had been moved by Leonardo's stories at the feast!"[8]

In different circumstances, and for different needs, he was original:

Before the invention of reliable timepieces with alarm

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[7] Kenneth Clark, The Renaissance, P. 59.

[8] Leonardo's Notebooks, Richter, P. 306.

> attachments, he described a hilarious contrivance to wake him; It involved the slow drip of water from an upper into a lower vessel which, when full, operated a lever that jerked his feet upward. To magnify the force of the lever he employed what is now known as a "mechanical relay," by which a small force increased- and this force being doubled, he noted, jerks violently upward the feet of the sleeper, who is thus awakened and goes about his business."[9]

Leonardo perceived nature to be infinitely more powerful than man. He set about discovering how natural forces worked, and trying to harness them for the use of man.

He proceeded step by step with his observations, evolving a method and framework for himself: (1) Experience of the world around us as gained through the senses is taken as the starting-point. (2) Reason and contemplation, which, though linked to the senses, stands above and outside them, deduces external and general laws from transitory and particular experiences. (3) these general laws must be demonstrated in logical sequence like mathematical propositions, and finally (4) they must be tested and verified by experiment, and then applied to the production of works of utility or of art according to plan. For Leonardo's purpose in acquiring knowledge was that he might obtain the knowledge to produce creations of his own. Truth could thus be verified. He was opposed to philosophical systems founded solely

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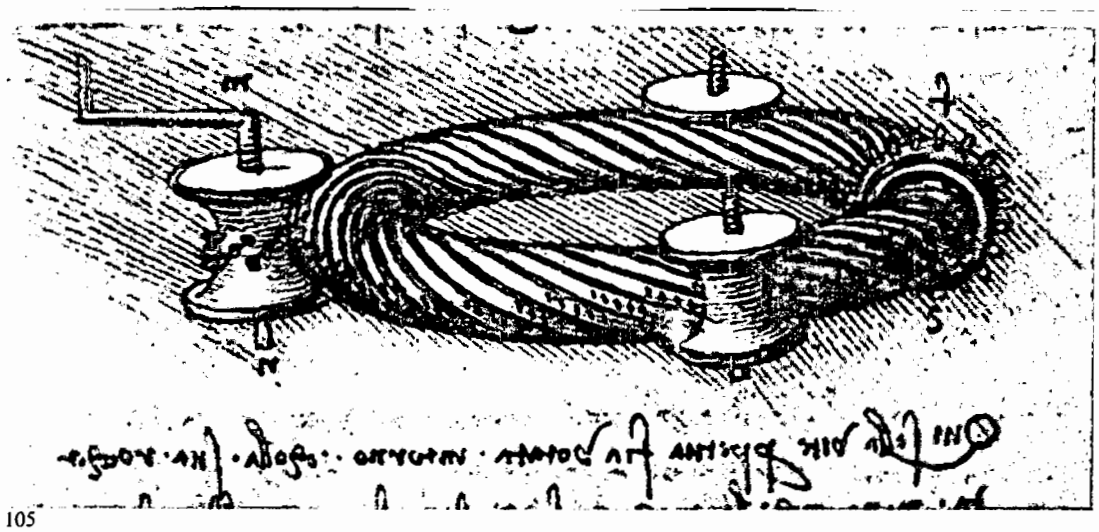
[9] Robert Wallace: The World of Leonardo, P. 108.



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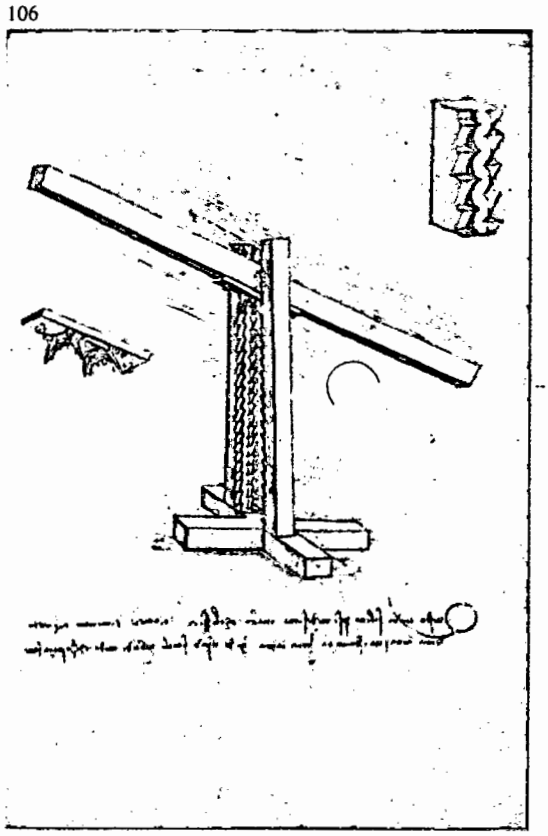
105. PERPETUAL SCREW Cod. Madrid I, f.70r.

106. ELEVATOR Cod. Madrid I, f.44r.

107. CHAINS Cod. Atl. f.357r.a.

106



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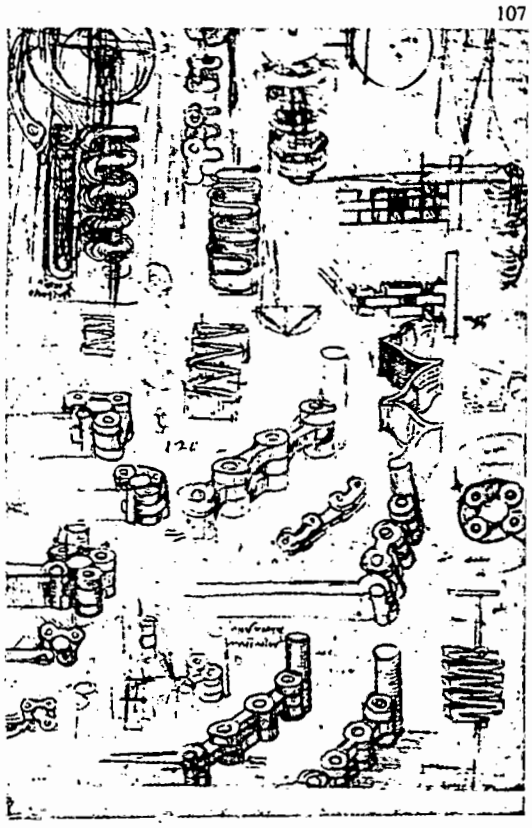

on words.[10]

Leonardo undoubtedly drew upon history for ideas. Roger Bacon of England had written about navigating vessels without oarsmen, wagons which move without horses, constructing machines for flight, submarine exploration, winches for heavy weights. Bruneschelli, Alberti, Ghiberti were brilliant engineers in his own country, and even earlier was Archimedes. Leonardo did not invent in a vacuum. His genius lay in being able to use ideas in innovative and original ways, and being able to translate those ideas into workable machines. He was as brilliant a draughtsman as artist. For his time, and the available materials, he was outstanding.

Mechanics, quotes Cianchi, is the science which deals with the equilibrium and the motion of both solid and liquid bodies; and is also the Art which teaches us how to build all sorts of machines, instruments, devices and similar things. Leonardo pursued this "Art" with as much enthusiasm as he did painting. His notes speak of four volumes on mechanical elements. He contributed greatly to science with his work on weight, force, thrust and impact, which he calls "movement's children." There are five simple machines that have been used since ancient times:

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[10] Richter: Leonardo's Notebooks, P. 1.

the winch, the lever, the pulley, the wedge and the screw. In all his designs, he uses these principles, and his favourite was the screw. "The nature of the screw and of its use, and how it should be used to pull rather than to push; and how it is stronger if it is single rather than double, and thin rather than thick.. and how many kinds of never ending screws can be made and how the never-ending screw can be paired with cog wheels..."[11] Cog-wheels, reduction gears, specially designed chains, and ball-bearings were added to Leonardo's stock for transmission of motion. But, says Cianchi, it is extraordinary that he never thought of using his beautifully designed flexible chains to transmit either continuous motion between two gears, discontinuous motion, as in clock mechanisms, or spring energy as in the case of the automatic lighter.

Linked to the problem of transmitting motion is the research on friction, which led to the use of bearings, a solution which is still valid today. Leonardo tried arranging axles in a way that avoided as much part-wear and friction as possible, he then tried bearings made from anti-friction metal (an alloy of copper and tin) and finally (brilliantly) came up with various types of ball bearings.

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[11] Cianchi: Leonardo's Machines: p.62: Cod.Madrid I,f.70r.

It must be remembered that his energy sources were animal and human muscle, wind, water, spring systems, weights and counterweights, and occasionally, steam. Materials too, were primitive and difficult when compared to Leonardo's creativity - Linen, silk, leather, bamboo, wood, cast iron, brass and bronze, tin, glass, but he managed.

He also proved, to his own satisfaction, the impossibility of perpetual motion, the subject of many discussions in his time. He designed an instrument with sticks and weights attached to the ends, and "no matter how much weight is attached to the wheel, which weight will cause its movement, doubtlessly the center of such a weight will stop at the center for its pole; and no instrument that human genius can invent which turns on its axis will be able to avoid such an effect.... O followers of continuous motion, how many varied geniuses you have created in such a research! You belong to the same fold as those who seek gold!"[12]

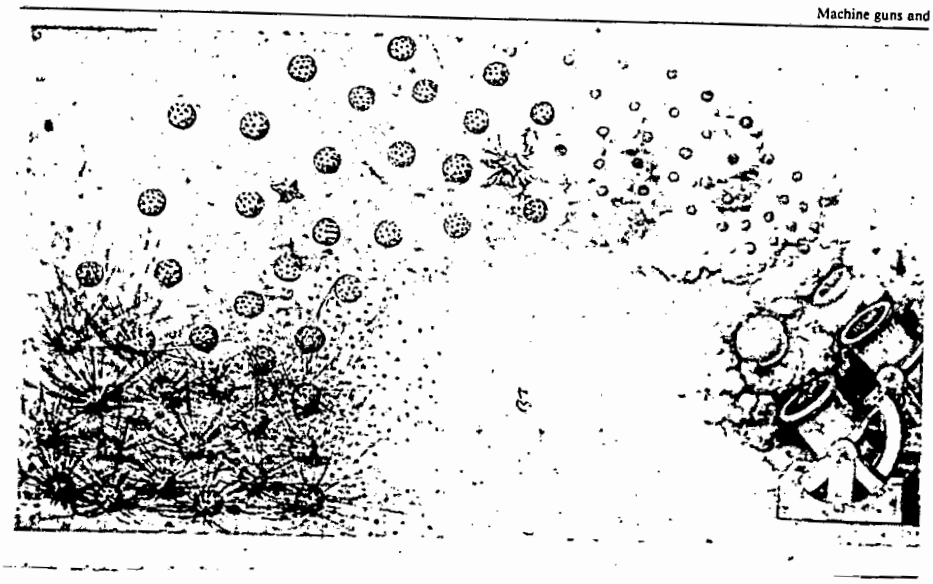
There was an increasing dependence upon military might in Italy. The courts would attach their military engineers, as well as their artists and poets. Leonardo's notebooks and drawings are not dated, and were dispersed after his death. So for ease of

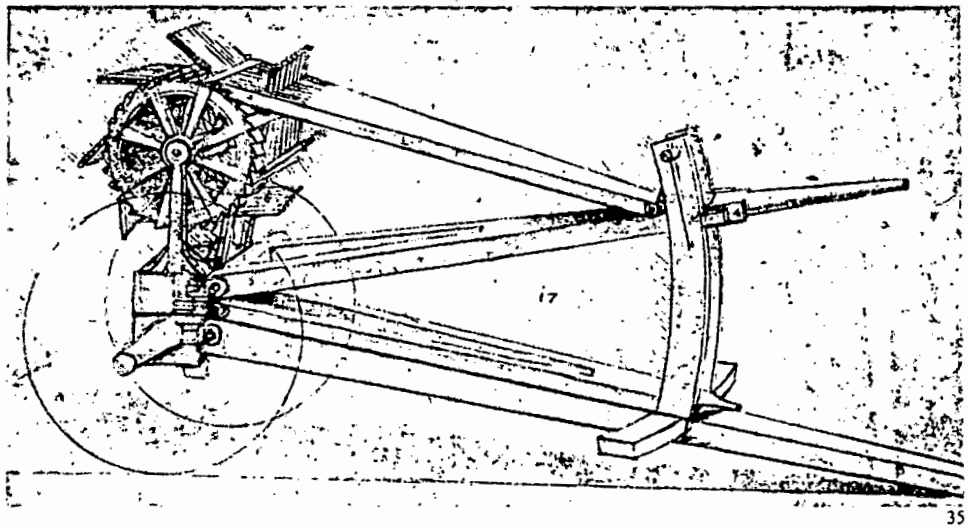
[12] Cianchi: Leonardo's Machines: p.82.Cod.Madrid I,f.145r.

reference, the notes have been put together according to subject matter. First, his military devices.

He examined the cross bow, which, until directed gunpowder took over, had the most penetrating power of contemporary weaponry. He designed Giants, 12 metres across, loading wheels, crossbows set in large mill wheels which could be fired more quickly. Slingshots, catapults, "reaping" wagons with lethal curved knives rotated by motion, tanks, huge levers for pushing seige ladders over, movable bridges, assault techniques, lighting mechanisms for cannons. He studied the foundries, and refined the tools used to smooth the barrels of cannons. He designed elevating arcs for them, and the first machine guns. He studied ballistics. He realized that huge cannon balls launched against large stationary targets like fortresses were useful, but he also thought of mortars, launching many small explosive cannon balls which shattered on impact, which were far more effective against advancing infantry. "It is the most deadly machine that exists. And when the cannon ball falls the nucleus sets fire to the other balls and the central ball explodes and shatters the others which catch fire in the time it takes to say a "Hail Mary". And it has an outer shell which encloses everything."[13] He varied the shell theme, and designed a 'cotombrot', a "cannon ball a half

[13] Chianchi: Leonardo's Machines: p.30.





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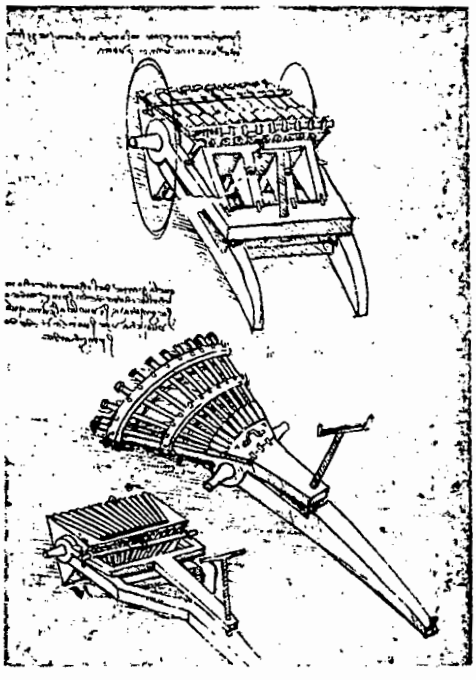
34. MACHINE GUNS Cod. Atl. f.56v.
35. MACHINE GUN Cod. Atl. f.3v.-a.



foot wide full of small projectiles made of paper mixed with sulphur, pitch and 'conocarsivo' which makes one sneeze when sniffed and in the middle there is gunpowder which when lit sets fire to all of the projectiles and before it is thrown among the troops with a wick tied with a pouch and then the rockets scatter themselves over an area a hundred armlengths in diameter and whistle."[14]

Leonardo's water studies are a subject on their own. He must have spent hours watching the turbulence and flow of water, trying to estimate its behaviour. It is a science which even today is unpredictable. His hydraulic machines include lock gates, canals, dredgers, bladders for the feet and poles with more bladders to facilitate walking on water, diving bells and breathing devices for underwater, webbed gloves, and, back to the military, doubled-hulled boats which could be submarines, torpedoes, and hull-crushing devices. One idea is to send a diver to tie the hull of an enemy boat to the bottom with a screw mechanism, so that a hole is torn and the boat immediately sinks. Then, of course, there are the water wheels, raising water in single and double phases.

Leonardo was fascinated by flight. He drew birds, bats wings,

[14] Chianchi: Leonardo's Machines: p.31.

Science, noted Leonardo, is an investigation by the mind which begins with the ultimate origin of a subject. Take, for example, the continuous quantity in the science of geometry: if we begin with the surface of a body we find that it is derived from lines, the boundaries of the surface. But we do not let the matter rest there, for we know that the line in its turn is terminated by points, and that the point is that ultimate unit than which there is nothing smaller. Therefore the point is the first beginning of geometry, and neither in nature nor in the human mind can there be anything which can originate the point ... No human investigation can be called true science without passing through mathematical tests; and if you say that the sciences which begin and end in the mind contain truth, this cannot be conceded and must be denied for many reasons. First and foremost because in such mental discourses experience does not come in, without which nothing reveals itself with certainty. [Trat. 1].

and,

See to it that the examples and proofs that are given in this work are defined before you cite them. [Leic. 11r][16]

Leonardo's important value was:..Experience has been the mistress of whoever has written well; and so as mistress I will cite her

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[16] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 8.

in all cases. [C.A. 119v].[17] He comments on experiment:

But before you base a law on this case test it two or three times and see whether the tests produce the same effects. [A.47r.]

Mechanics is the paradise of mathematical science, because by means of it one comes to the fruits of mathematics. [E. 8v.][18]

He did not agree with Alchemy:

Nature is concerned with the production of elementary things. But Man from these elementary things produces an infinite number of compounds; although he is unable to create any element except another life like himself - that is, in his children.

Old Alchemists will be my witnesses, who have never either by chance or by experiment succeeded in creating the smallest element which can be created by nature - let alone gold, immune from destruction by fire, which has power over all other created things...And if gross avarice must drive you into such error, why do you not go to the mines where Nature produces such gold, and there become her disciple?... and she will show you the veins of

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[17] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 1.

[18] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 9.

the gold spreading through the lapis lazuli, whose colour is unaffected by the power of the fire. And examine well this ramification of the gold and you will see that the extremities are continuously expanding in slow movement, transmuting into gold whatever they touch; and note that therein is a living organism which it is not in your power to produce. [W.19045v.].[19]

And even less did he agree with necromancy:

Of all human opinions that is the most foolish which believes in necromancy, the sister of alchemy. But is more open to reprehension than alchemy because it never gives birth to anything except things like itself, that is to say, lies; this does not happen in alchemy, whose function cannot be exercised by nature herself, because there are in her no organic instruments wherewith she might do the work that man performs with his hands, by the use of which he has made glass, etc. But this necromancy, the flag and flying banner blown by the wind, the guide of the stupid multitude, which is constantly witness to the limitless effects of this art; and they have filled books, declaring that enchantments and spirits can work and speak without tongues, and can speak without organic instruments- without which speech is impossible - and can carry the heaviest

[19] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 10.

weights and bring tempest and rain; and that men can be turned into cats and wolves and other beasts, although indeed it is those who affirm such things who first become beasts. And surely if this necromancy did exist, as is believed by shallow wits, there is nothing on earth that would have so much importance alike for the harm and the service of man; if it were true that there were in such an art a power to disturb the tranquil serenity of the air, and convert it into darkness, to create coruscations and winds with dreadful thunder and lightning flashing through the darkness, and with impetuous storms to overthrow high buildings and to uproot forests; and with these to shake armies and break and overthrow them, and - more important than this - to create the devastating tempests and thereby deprive the peasants of the reward of their labours. For what method of warfare can there be which can inflict such damage upon the enemy as the power to deprive him of his harvests? What naval battle could be compared with that which he could wage who has command of the winds and can make ruinous gales that would submerge any fleet whatsoever? Surely whoever commands such violent forces will be lord of the nations, and no human ingenuity will be able to resist his destructive forces. The buried treasures, the jewels that lie in the body of the earth, will all be made manifest to him. No lock, or fortress, however impregnable, will avail to save anyone against the will

of such a necromancer. He will have himself carried through the air from East to West, and through all the opposite parts of the universe. But why should I enlarge further on this? What is there which could not be done by a craftsman such as this? Almost nothing, except the escape from death.

We have, therefore, explained in part the mischief and the usefulness that belong to such an art if it is real. And if it is real, why has it not remained among men who desire it to much, not having regard to any deity? For I know that there are numberless people who, in order to gratify one of their appetites, would destroy God and the whole of the universe. If this art has never remained among men, although so necessary to them, it never existed, and never will exist. [W. 19048v.][20]

All our knowledge has its origin in our perceptions. [Triv. 23][21] The eye which is the window of the soul is the chief organ whereby the understanding can have the most complete and magnificent view of the infinite works of nature. [B.N. 2038 19r].

He paid particular attention to vision, which, as his own

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[20] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 11/12.

[21] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 4.

A

B

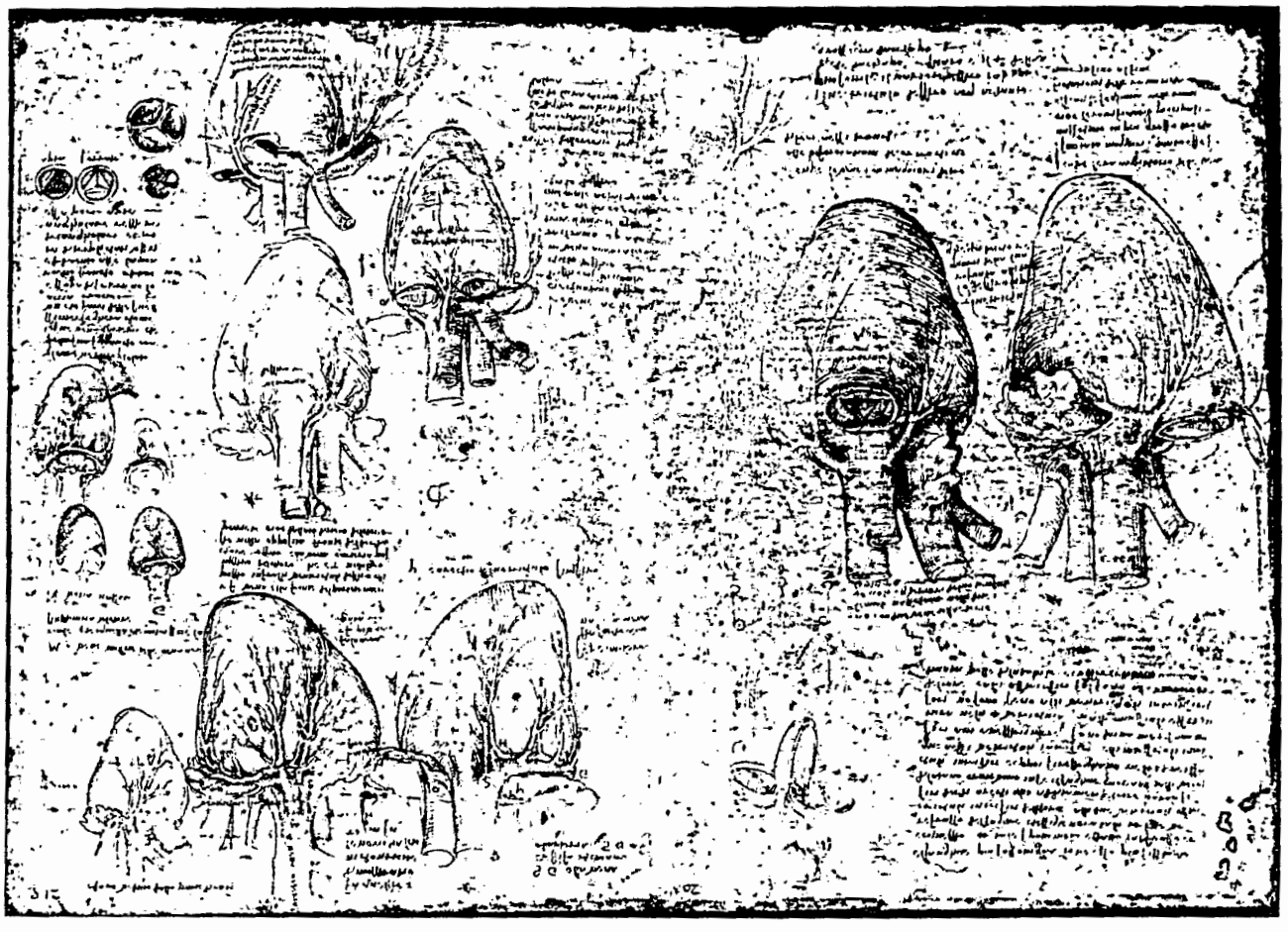
eyesight was phenomenal, is logical. The following example demonstrates the quality of his eyesight. One fine day in July, Leonardo climbed up Monte Rosa,

"a peak of the Alps that divide France from Italy. I say that the blue which is seen in the atmosphere is not its own colour but is caused by warm humidity evaporated in minute and imperceptible atoms on which the solar rays fall rendering them luminous against the immense darkness of the region of fire that forms a covering above them. There I saw the dark atmosphere overhead and the sun as it shone on the mountain was far brighter here than on the plains below because a smaller extent of atmosphere lay between the summit of the mountain and the sun."[22]

This observation is outstanding on two counts. Firstly, the inhumanly sharp eye of which Leonardo was possessed, and secondly, the factual and accurate interpretation he deduced from his observation, quite devoid of alchemic-like or romantic speculation.

His botanical drawings are so precise that several of his illustrations could be used today. He was the first to describe the laws of phyllotaxy, heliotropism and geotropism. Until his

[22] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P.333.



time, plants were only studied by pharmacologists and magicians. His anatomical studies and drawings are masterpieces of accuracy. He was a hairs-breadth away from discovering the circulation of the blood. He was continually comparing the human and animal anatomies. He wished to discern what structures were beneath surfaces, how they were covered and how they worked. He used scientific methods of research in order to ascertain Nature's laws and introduce them into his own work.

"The painter ought to be solitary and consider what he sees, discussing it with himself in order to select the most excellent parts of whatever he sees. He should act as a mirror which transmutes itself into as many colours as are those of the objects that are placed before it. Thus he will seem to be a second nature. [Trat. 58a].[23]

It was his intention one day to make a compendium of all technical knowledge, even ranging so far as the beginning and end of the world as he imagined them. He would draw an object or phenomenon so skillfully that it would become a "fact" which all the world could see, or could grasp with the aid of brief explanatory notes, and thus it would be proved. But his body of works became so large, with so many repetitions, that the whole

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[23] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 216.

task was ultimately daunting. He managed to formalize his Treatise on Painting, but he got no further. One of his problems was that he made the same observations repeatedly - if a certain phenomena interested him, he would watch it again and again. Leonardo always repeated experiments and proofs. He did not hold with generalizations, seeing everything as part of the whole- even repeated observations of the same phenomena. He was most impatient of pedantry, and he wished the whole, macrocosm or microcosm, to be expressed in empirical terms. He stands at the beginnings of the language split between science and religion:

The abbreviators* (of works) do harm to knowledge and to love, for the love of anything is the offspring of knowledge, love being more fervent in proportion as knowledge is more certain. And this certainty springs from a complete knowledge of all the parts which united compose the whole of the thing which ought to be loved.

Of what use, then, is he who in order to abridge the part of the things of which he professes to give complete information leaves out the greater part of the things of which the whole is composed. True it is that impatience, the mother of folly, is she who praises brevity, as if such persons had not life long enough to acquire a complete knowledge of one single subject,

such as the human body. And they want to comprehend the mind of God which embraces the whole universe, weighing and mincing it into infinite parts as if they had dissected it. O human stupidity! do you not perceive that you have spent your whole life with yourself, and yet are not aware of that thing you chiefly possess, that is of your folly? And so with the crowd of sophists you deceive yourself and others, despising the mathematical sciences in which is contained the true information about the subjects of which they treat. And then you would fain occupy yourself with miracles and write and give information of those things of which the human mind is incapable, and which cannot be proved by any instance from nature. And you fancy you have wrought miracles when you have spoiled the work of some ingenuous mind and do not perceive that you are falling into the same error as he who strips a tree of its adornment of branches laden with leaves intermingled with fragrant flowers or fruit in order to demonstrate the suitability of the tree for making planks. As did Justinus, abridging the histories of Trogus Pompeius, who had written in an ornate style all the great deeds of his forefathers full of admirable and picturesque descriptions; and by so doing composed a bald work fit only for such impatient minds who fancy they are wasting time when they spend it usefully in the study of works of nature and the deeds of men. .....[W. 19084r].

* Footnote in Richter: The name 'abbreviatori' was given to the secretaries at the chancery of the Vatican.[24]

The themes which Leonardo himself found most important slowly emerged as painting, architecture, the elements of mechanics, and a "visible cosmology", which included his human anatomy, geophysical, botanical, hydrological and aerological researches- the microcosms within the macrocosm, in fact. He scorned speculative knowledge, against which he set his observations of facts gained through experience. He "knew how to see."
"Man has been called "a lesser world" by the ancients and indeed the term is well applied. Seeing that if a man is composed of earth, water, air, and fire, this body of earth is similar. While man has within himself bones as a stay and framework for the flesh, the world has stones which are the supports of earth. While man has within him a pool of blood wherein the lungs as he breathes expand and contract, so the body of the earth has its ocean, which also rises and falls every six hours with the breathing of the world; as from the said pool of blood proceed the veins which spread their branches through the human body, so the ocean fills the body of the earth with an infinite number of veins of water... In this body of the earth is lacking, however,

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[24] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 3.

the nerves, and these are absent because nerves are made for the purpose of movement; and as the world is perpetually stable, and no movement takes place here, nerves are not necessary. But in all other things man and the earth are very much alike. [A. 54v.][25]

Within the functions, uses and execution of his art, Leonardo was religious. But as far as the church and clergy were concerned, he ignored them and was anti-religious. He placed no faith at all in graven images, or sculptured idols. And yet, Leonardo believed that a perfectly conceived and executed work of art could raise the observer to a higher state of contemplation.

With his tact and acumen he was never harassed by the church, its only interference with him personally was to delay for several weeks dispensation to study anatomy from actual corpses, and this inconvenience was deliberately fomented by a disgruntled employee and his colleague who worked in the Belvedere for Pope Leo X. On the subject of ecclesiastical interference, Kenneth Clark points out that there was no need whatsoever for Leonardo to conceal his notes from the Church or try and disguise them by writing backwards. In Leonardo's time the Church allowed far more

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[25] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 46.

dangerous and directly subversive opinions than his to go unchecked. He wrote backwards because he was left-handed, and he did not publish his work because he could not get around to the mammoth task of marshalling years of ideas and material. "This is to be a collection without order, taken from many papers, which I have copied here, hoping afterwards to arrange them according to the subjects of which they treat; and I believe that I shall have to repeat the same thing several times: for which, O reader, blame me not because the subjects are many, and memory cannot retain them ... all the more because of the long intervals between one time of writing and another." [26]

Leonardo's own personal brand of religion was independent of organized Christianity or the Platonic Humanism, though borrowing from both. He wrote:

"Man is born not to mourn in idleness but to work at large and magnificent tasks, thereby pleasing and honouring God, and manifesting in himself perfect *virtu*, that is, the fruit of happiness."

On a personally religious level he is more in line with Burkhardt's concept of Renaissance religion, who says that

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[26] Richter: Leonardo's Notebooks: Preface vii.

honour, or *virtu* in the classical sense is the ideal, rather than love of or unity with God:

The age as it flies glides secretly and deceives one and another; nothing is more fleeting than the years, but he who sows virtue reaps honour. [C.A.71.v].[27]

I wish I had words to serve me to blame those who would fain extol the worship of men above that of the sun; for in the whole universe I do not see a body of greater magnitude and power than this, and its light illumines all the celestial bodies which are distributed throughout the universe. All vital force descends from it since the heat that is in living creatures comes from the soul (vital spark): and there is no other heat nor light in the universe.... And certainly those who have chosen to worship men as gods such as Jove, Saturn, Mars and the like have made a very great error, seeing that even if a man were as large as our earth he would seem like one of the least of the stars which appears but a speck in the universe; and seeing also that men are mortal and subject to decay and corruption in their tombs. [F. 5r.]

These are not the thoughts of an atheist, but rather of a man who recognizes that nature, without the order of laws, would devolve into chaos. Leonardo was fascinated by the forces of life in

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[27] Leonardo's Notebooks, Richter, P. 275.

nature. He does not see that Man has either a dominant or special role in Nature, but is, rather, contributing to the overall harmony. This does not echo the Christian dogma that man was given dominion over nature, and has God-bestowed authority to do to her whatever he wishes.

Leonardo considered the soul informed the body. In his anatomical studies he will have seen the perfect and complex precision mechanism lifeless - and has no difficulty at all acknowledging the soul as the animator, the life force of the body, giving it individuality, meaning and above all linking it to the spiritual and the world of Nature. At no time does he allow that a spirit may exist without corporeal or material reality of some kind.

We part from the body with extreme reluctance, and I indeed believe that its grief and lamentation are not without cause. [W.19001r].[28]

Whoever would see how the soul dwells within its body let him observe how this body uses its daily habitation, for if this is without order and confused the body will be kept in disorder and confusion by its soul. [C.A. 76r].

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[28] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 280.

The soul is quite different from the body in substance:
A soul can never be corrupted with the corruption of the body, but acts in the body like the wind which causes the sound of the organ, where if a pipe is spoiled, the wind would cease to produce a good result. [Triv. 40v].[29]

The soul is of much subtler substance than the lightest elements such as air or ether. It can only manifest when the less subtle substances are present, such as air, water, plant life, flesh and blood, as life. Where there is death, then there is no spirit, and as death is a permanent state there is no permanent spirit. Thus when a body dies, so does the soul. It is not separable from the material, but it is incorruptible. It would appear that Leonardo's idea of spirit and soul is close to that of a vital force, which is ever-present, but only visible in living matter, but which nevertheless dissipates when the physical vehicle dies. Or modifies into a non-individual form. Hence his views on death:

Every evil leaves a sorry in the memory, except the supreme evil, death, which destroys this memory together with life. [H.33v].

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[29] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 281

One of Christianity's main tenets is life with Christ after death. Leonardo mentions salvation only once in his Notes, in connection with the functions of painting only. He says in the Artist's Course of Study that the expression of the spirit is not enough, neither is a knowledge of anatomy. The artist must penetrate deeper. Actions must be suggestive of the motives which incited them; faces and gestures must reveal frames of mind. The human body was an outward and visible expression of the soul. The painter must reverse the process and by constructing a body give expression to a spirit. Leonardo considered this the artist's highest purpose, i.e. his salvation:

A good painter has two chief objects to paint, man and the intention of his soul; the former is easy, the latter hard, because he has to represent it by the attitudes and movements of the limbs. [Trat. 180.] Our body is subject to heaven, and heaven is subject to the spirit. [Triv.36v].

There are notes that indicate that he believes that there is no Salvation of souls, though he does not say this overtly. That would indeed have been heretical. It is also not clear whether Leonardo thought that incorruptible spirit or vital force is ever-present as Deity, or whether it has to grow with each new life form germinated, which includes Earth and her elements, and

animals. He acknowledges Deity, or God, often, but his concepts of this entity and how it works are not clear.

It would be well to try to understand what Leonardo thinks of when he uses the word "truth". He notes:

Truth and Falsehood

Truth	the Sun
Falsehood	a mask.

Fire destroys falsehood, that is sophistry, and restores truth, driving out darkness. Fire is to be put for the destroyer of every sophistry, as the discoverer and demonstrator of truth; because it is light, the banisher of darkness, which is the concealer of all essential things.

Truth in the end cannot be hidden.
[W. 12700v.][30]

Beyond a doubt truth bears the same relation to falsehood as light to darkness. And truth is so excellent in itself, that, even if it dwells on humble and lowly matter, it rises infinitely

[30] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 260.

above the uncertainties and lies about high and lofty matters. Because in our minds, even if lying should be the fifth element, the truth about things will remain nevertheless the chief nutriment of superior intellects, though not of wandering wits. But you who live on dreams are better pleased by the sophistical reasons and frauds of wits in great and uncertain things than by those reasons which are certain and natural and not so exalted. [Trn. 12r].[31]

In spite of these processes of "sophistical reasons and frauds of wits", truth remains undamaged. This is comparable to his view of the soul, which, he says, is not corrupted by a faulty body. He was very impatient with semantics, sophistry, and what Kenneth Clark calls the "mumbo jumbo" of religious ritual and dogma.

Leonardo gobbled up information from every quarter. He nearly discovered the circulation of the blood, he designed the most exotic machines, he drew botanically, he could compose music, paint masterpieces, he was sought after by princes and kings, and yet we still know very little of what sort of person he was. In this way he is like Shakespeare, who, although we have a large body of his work, is still unknown as a person. It was in Leonardo's constant outward observations through the senses, and

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[31] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 283.

his contemplation by reason, that he found his best "mode of engagement" with "all-that- out-there."

LEONARDO DA VINCI

PART III

In December 1499, Leonardo fled from Milan because Sforza, the Duke, was removed from power by the French, notably Charles d'Amboise, who had ambitions to be Pope. The political background reading to this "takeover" leaves one's head abuzz, full of family feuds, bribes, horse-trading and vengeance. In February, 1500, Ludovico Sforza returned to Milan triumphantly, and many of his court returned too. Leonardo did not. The French retaliated in April, captured Ludovico Sforza, and Leonardo wrote from Venice:

"The governor of the Castello made prisoner.
Visconti dragged along the ground and his son killed.
Giovanni della Rosa robbed of his money.
The Duke has lost his state and his possessions and his liberty, and none of his enterprises have been completed."[1]

Visconti was the captain of the Duke's forces, Rosa his astrologer, physician and chief minister. There is no triumph

[1] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter: p.340.

here. It is more like an epitaph. Leonardo lost his Milanese possessions, but had been astute enough to send his money to Florence, and to stay clear of the Duke's Indian summer.

He notes his method of coping with tyrants:
"When besieged by ambitious tyrants I find a means of offence and defence in order to preserve the chief gift of nature, which is liberty; and first I would speak of the position of the walls, and then of how the various peoples can maintain their good and just lords." [B.N. 2037 10r].[2]

The recipe above is supreme diplomacy. He discusses the material safety of the tyrant, implying care and concern for the person, and then gently pointing out how he in turn can care back. He is unassailable courtesy-wise.

Leonardo was a collector of allegories and fables. They are generally pessimistic in character. For example: "The Privet and the Blackbird" - In this fable Leonardo ridicules those who think that everybody and everything exists only to be of service to them. "The Chestnut and the Fig Tree" - Those who are pleased with themselves and look down on others are put in their place. "The Willow and the gourd" - The weak are used for the benefit of

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[2] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 284.

48. Study of a 'Nutcracker' man and a beautiful youth, c. 1500. Uffizi, Florence

the strong; and on trying to free themselves are liable to become the prey of worse parasites. "The Legend of the Wind and Mohammed" - Leonardo describes the pride of the wine and its dissatisfaction with what happens to it when passing through the human body. He approves of its prohibition as enforced by Mohammed.[3]

Although many of these must be derivative, they have, when read as a whole, a certain unity expressive of Leonardo's point of view. His heros are no sooner confident of success and security than they are utterly destroyed by some unexpected agency. Attempts at self-improvement are fraught with danger. Nature only allows man to reach some pinnacle of achievement only to topple him completely. He believes in cause and effect, and has a fairly negative outlook, like the Old Testament, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

There is another theme running through the fables which occurs again and again in Leonardo's art and notebooks, and that is the presence of the beautiful and the grotesque.

His drawings of the Grotesques are so strong and energetic that they become the heroic, and those of the youth are beautiful and

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[3] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, Ps. 235 & 237.

bland. "Virile and effeminate, they symbolize the two sides of Leonardo's nature, a dualism I have already suggested in the contrast between his life in Florence and in Milan," says Kenneth Clark.[4] The recurrence of the "Nutcracker Man" and the "Beautiful Youth" symbolize the two sides of Leonardo's nature, his obsession with ideal beauty and truth and the opposite, the hideous freaks and caricatures rendered by hideous forces.

The virile characteristics were exemplified in his work *The Battle of Anghiari*, where several very tough soldiers and horses are locked in mortal combat, commissioned by the Signoria in Florence. Preliminary drawings have survived, and copies of the original (unfinished) fresco were made, so we have some idea of Leonardo's design. It was one of the highest points of his expression - embodying his "science of painting." The actions centres round the fight for a group of flags. Horses and men are balanced although unbelievably twisted, frozen at a moment of intense action, but still full of violent motion. He uses his studies of equilibrium and fulcrums, physiology and physiognomy, and anatomy of both animals and men to full advantage. The horses' faces have as much expression as the mens'.

Leonardo denied emphatically the old scholastic belief that only

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[4] Kenneth Clark: Leonardo da Vinci, P. 70.

those sciences which have their origin in abstract intellectual speculation can escape the charge of being "mechanical". And that the belief that the seven Liberal Arts (headed by Poetry and Music) represented the highest human effort, painting should be relegated to the mechanical or inferior arts. He uses examples of religious imagery - the Deity, relics, altars, shrines, pilgrimages and eternal salvation - to justify his point of view:

"Painting cannot be taught to those not endowed by nature, like mathematics where the pupil takes in as much as the master gives..... It remains peerless in its nobility; alone it does honour to its author, remaining unique and precious;..... Do we not see that pictures representing Deity are kept constantly concealed under costly draperies and that before they are uncovered great ecclesiastical rites are performed with singing to the strains of instruments; and at the moment of the unveiling the great multitudes of peoples who have flocked there throw themselves to the ground worshipping and praying to Him whose image is represented for the recovery of health and for their eternal salvation, as if the Deity were present in person. The like does not happen with any other work of man; and if you assert that it is not due to the merit of the painter but to the subject represented we answer that, if that were so, men might remain peacefully in their beds instead of going to wearisome and

perilous places as we see them doing constantly on pilgrimages. And what necessity impels these men to go on pilgrimages? You surely will agree that the image of the Deity is the cause and that no amount of writing could produce the equal of such an image either in form or in power. It would seem, therefore, that the Deity loves such a painting and loves those who adore and revere it and prefers to be worshipped in this rather than in another form of imitation; and bestows grace and deliverance through it according to the belief of those who assemble in such a place." [Trat. 8.].[5]

Leonardo saw painting as a focus for ecclesiastical rites, the high point of worship and ritual, whether he subscribed to the ritual or not. It must be remembered that very few people could read in his time, and so the visual arts were a source of wonder, information and instruction. Furthermore, Leonardo was speaking of painting at its best, and at its best it is powerful enough to invoke a religious experience. His own works, *The Uffizi Annunciation*, both paintings of *The Madonna of the Rocks*, his *St. Anne, Virgin and Child*, and *The Last Supper*, are paintings which fit easily into this category.

His conception of man as a part of nature, subject to the same

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[5] Leonardo's Notebooks: Richter, P. 196.

2laws of growth, and controlled by the same chemistry is such that it is one of the roots of his art and life philosophy. This idea that man was a product of nature was not consistent with religious belief at the time. He also saw that man was almost powerless against nature, when she wished to exert herself, and he was extremely unsure of any sort of divine dimension in man which could survive death, such as an immortal soul. Man was distinguished from nature by his powers of reason, but not to the degree where he could consider himself more powerful.
Michelangelo, on the other hand, was a Christian of profound concern. His mind was dominated by ideas of good and evil, suffering, purification, unity with God, which to Leonardo was profitless speculation.

That is, until his death. He wrote his will two weeks before he died, and he required precise religious rituals to be performed.

First he commends his soul to our Lord, Almighty God, and to the glorious Virgin Mary, and to our Lord Saint Michael, to all blessed angels and Saints male and female in Paradise.

Item. The said Testator desires to be buried within the Church of Saint Florentin at Amboise, and that his body shall be borne thither by the chaplains of the Church.

Item. That his body may be followed from the said place to the said church of St. Florentin by the collegium of the said church, that is to say by the rector and the prior, or by their vicar and chaplains of the church of St. Denis at Amboise, also the Minors of the place; and before his body shall be carried to the said church this Testator desires that in the said church of St. Florentin three grand masses shall be celebrated by the deacon and sub-deacon and that on the day on which these three high masses are celebrated, thirty low masses shall also be performed at St. Gregory.

Item. That in the said church of St. Denis similar services shall be performed as above.

Item. That the same shall be done in the church of the said friars and Minors.

Item. He desires that at his funeral sixty tapers shall be carried by sixty poor men, to whom shall be given money for carrying them at the discretion of the said Melzi, and these tapers shall be distributed among the four above-mentioned churches.

Item. The said Testator gives to each of the said churches ten lbs. of wax in thick tapers, which shall be placed in the said churches to be used on the day when those services are celebrated.

Item. That alms be given to the poor of the Hotel Dieu, to the Poor of Saint Lazare d'Amboise and, to that end there shall be given and paid to the treasures of that same fraternity the sum and amount of seventy soldi of Tours.

Whatever his impatience with the "mumbo-jumbo" of religious ritual, and with honouring a man when he can no longer hear, Leonardo wished his own death to be celebrated in due contemporary form.

Leonardo's perceptions of life are complex. He started off romantic, idealistic, full of enthusiasm, but after the charges laid against him in Florence he seemed to subliminate his romanticism, and put more emphasis on observations and experience, more energy into research. Technically he was totally law-abiding. He could be cynical, which on occasions was useful to him. He developed his skills, independent of contemporary fashions. He put all his energies into tangible reality. He tackled meaning directly from the immediate, ever searching for deeper understanding. Kenneth Clark says:

Yet if we turn from his writings to his drawings, we find a subtle and tender understanding of human feelings which is not solely due to the efficiency of the optic nerve. In his contemplation of nature, this human understanding seems to have been gradually swamped; and here, perhaps is a hint of some unifying principle in all Leonardo's work. From the first he is obsessed by vital force and finds it expressed in plants and creatures; then, as his scientific researches develop he learns the vast power of natural forces and he pursues science as a means by which these forces can be harnessed for human advantage. The further he penetrates the more he becomes aware of man's impotence; his studies of hydrodynamics suggest a power of water beyond human control; his studies of geology show that the earth has undergone cataclysmic upheavals of which ordinary earthquakes are but faint and distant echoes; his studies of embryology point to a central problem of creation apparently insoluble by science. The intellect is no longer supreme, and human beings cease to be the centre of nature; so they gradually fade from his imagination, or when they appear, as St Anne or St. John, they are human no longer but symbols of force and mystery.[6]

Leonardo's "Cosmic trust" [Cumpsty's phrase] is based on

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[6] Clark, Kenneth. Leonardo da Vinci. P.160.

observing and experiencing the entire world of Nature, which includes man in all his various metiers. The laws of Nature are powerful and Nature is much larger than man. Imagination, fears and opinions very often interfere with detached observations about life experience, so Leonardo deliberately set about minimizing their impact in his mode of engagement, and, of course, his work. He succeeded in this goal, and his Cosmic trust was refined and sufficient and REAL, he had faith in natural law and experience. But he was apprehensive facing death. He could not conceive of what it would be like, in spite of his formidable intellect and discernment. He could only experience it once, and he was urgent about getting it right. His will commended his soul to God, the Virgin Mary and St. Michael, and expressed exactly what religious rites were to be performed. One feels that at the end he imparted to church ritual a real transcendental value to this mystery of death. It is inconceivable that Leonardo did not try and experience the soul, or vital force, for himself. He looked out, not inwards. He could not isolate and draw that intrinsic thing that looked out from behind his own eyes. He practiced looking outward with such success that it is difficult to get to grips with his character. He was one of the best at "describing what it is like to be confronted by it," but he could not describe what it was that was doing the confronting.

LEONARDO DA VINCI

CONCLUSION

Leonardo related to the *religious culture* of his time expediently. He neither antagonized nor toadied to the church. The Church was extremely temporal in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, becoming one of the wealthiest and most powerful of the principalities in Italy. Leonardo had very little time for priests and their behaviour, but he confined his criticisms to his Notebooks. Equally, he would have made the minimum observances required by social and religious usage, otherwise he would not have been commissioned by religious institutions to work for them.

Although he was personally critical of the state of the church and its laity, he enjoyed the myths and legends which surrounded Biblical characters. Leonardo had a Bible and a psalter, but it must be remembered that only priests and upwards were permitted to read the Bible in the Roman Catholic church. Hence a great number of stories had grown up around the central characters of the New Testament. With these Leonardo was familiar. Apart from the necessary outward religious observance, Leonardo

pursued his own brand of natural and practical philosophy, and was as kind and generous and honest as he could be. His perceived standing in the institutional forms of the contemporary religion were variable, to the degree where Vasari wrote that he was an atheist, which he retracted when Melzi, Leonardo's heir, explained the matter. Leonardo was probably best described as "non-aligned."

Leonardo was *motivated* by an insatiable desire for knowledge. He wanted to penetrate the deepest secrets of nature. He did not appear to have the same desire to know about himself, or if he did look into his own depths he did not express what he found, though his powers of expression were considerable. He wished to draw and paint perfectly, then came the steady realization that there is always a level behind the one in which one is working-bigger, smaller, faster, slower, lighter than souls, heavier than gold. The quest for explanation was life long.

Leonardo did not look to the church for explanation, he became a student of nature. He was *"bigger"* than the religion of his time in that he did not subscribe to the doctrines prescribed by the church, corrupt and confining, but went his own way to understand the Ultimately Real through nature and experience. He knew that there was more to be discerned in life than the

church allowed. His roaming over the Tuscan Hills until he was fourteen formed his deep lifelong love of the natural forces. All his observations, ideas, and experiments he put in his Notebooks, of which a quarter have survived. Unfortunately he never edited them, in spite of his intentions. Deliberate communication for posterity was not important to him. [1.i.]

Leonardo was *incomparable.* He was a highly skilled painter, sculptor, musician, mathematician, engineer, draughtsman, architect, inventor and designer, botanist and anatomist. He was brilliant in the arts and sciences, he had a "towering intellect." His senses too were very highly developed, particularly his eyesight, which was for him the most important sense. He prided himself on "knowing how to see." Physically he was beautiful and athletic. And, because of his homosexuality, he was able to draw on the feminine side of his nature, which gives his universality a curious androgynous quality. He is the most variously endowed of all the case studies. [1.i.i].

Leonardo's *talents for expression* were more than sufficient for what he had to say, even taking into account his excellent senses. His eye/hand co-ordination were probably the best the world has known, and he used his drawing as academic proof. He delighted in Reason, and brought his intelligence to bear on the

problems that faced him in all disciplines, observing and deducing and drawing again what he saw and thought. [1.i.ii.]

What he discovered, or wanted to express, was not real or valid to him unless it arose from contemplated experience. Leonardo was limited by his senses, excellent though they were. His *self-expression* was more than *adequate* for what he perceived. The products of speculations of "pure" mind had no permanent basis in Leonardo's reality. As he got older he became less interested in the human dilemma as such, it was only a small part of the whole. Leonardo wanted to understand the whole. The "transcendent" way was a quest to find out what was behind this fabulous creation. Leonardo belonged to it physically and mentally. He found it awesome that he was super-endowed with powers of penetration which were well above normal. [1.i.iii].

From his paintings of the Last Supper and his two versions of the Virgin of the Rocks, it is apparent that he felt that the Bible dealt exclusively with the human condition. He worked closely with the myth and symbol of his contemporaries. His portrayals of Christ in the Last Supper and Mary as the Virgin (in spite of the fact that Jesus is in the picture) "spring from a deeper source. ...Leonardo, with all his apparent coldness, his aloofness from ordinary human feelings, his essential

strangeness, he could yet create these figures so simple, so touching, and so universal in their appeal."[1] In *The Last Supper* the Twelve Apostles are products of enormous knowledge and planning, everything known about them is taken into account, even to thinking through how each apostle would characteristically react to the statement that one of them would betray Jesus. All this is on an intensely human - and Christian - level, very different from the practical objectivity of his scientific notebooks. However, his ability of expression was not confined to one discipline. He could draw everything, from ideal emotions to water-turbulence to botanical specimens and draughtsman's designs. [1.i.iii].

Leonardo stood back from *All-that-out-there* by virtue of his reason. His senses would engage the problem, his reason would analyse, and in as personally detached fashion as possible, he would watch all kinds of life. [1.ii.i.]

Leonardo had *cosmic trust* - in the power and order and beauty of the universe. He seemed to have trouble conceiving that his cosmic trust could contract down to the personal. He displays this doubt two weeks before his death, when he wrote his will and set out the donations, masses, etc. that he required, an effort

[1] Clark: Leonardo da Vinci: p.95.

to hedge his bets, or personalize his death. In the end, it appears as though he doesn't quite make it - with the confidence crisis of all the rituals and votive candles he specifies in his will. Before that, he had used his enormous intelligence to discern Nature's mechanisms, he even made a few lofty strictures on dying. He had, however, serious doubts about man, as one of the microcosms in the macrocosm, having an individual soul. In his notes he says that Man was informed by a vital force, which died with the body, or returned to the Sun, the mainspring of all vital forces, upon death. "The rest of the definition of the soul I leave to the imagination of the friars, those fathers of the people who by inspiration know all secrets. I leave alone the sacred books, for they are supreme truth." [W.19115.r][2] For Leonardo, imagination and inspiration were inadmissible as evidence, as they were not grounded in solid experiential fact. He was very aware of the cosmos, but his trust in it was tempered by the realization of its power and its indiscriminate striking force, so much more powerful than any man. Man was powerless against flood, wind, famine, drought, and Man himself need not necessarily be protected by God, so Leonardo's *cosmic trust* was qualified. Man belonged, as nature belonged, to the Universe. He did not necessarily belong to the Church.

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[2] Richter: Leonardo's Notebooks: p.283.

Love of the natural world permeated his being. He loved all animals, and would buy captive birds in the market place and release them. "He had such a strong sense of organic life, of growth and decay, of the infinitely small and the infinitely big, in short of the nature of the physical world, that he rarely attempted an abstract proposition which was not mathematical;.."[3] There is no doubt that whatever he turned his hand to he learnt phenomenally fast. Painting, mathematics, sculpture, geometry, perspective, cartography, complex designs, mechanical devices and models, all his efforts were "powerfully fed by a willing memory and intellect, and his writing conveyed his ideas so precisely, that his arguments and reasoning confounded the most formidable critics."[4] [1.ii.ii.]

Leonardo did not seem to have a *sense of providence*. He had intuition in personal matters, but was not driven by a sense of leadership or urge to impart information like some of the other case studies. He does not seem to have been competitive. But Leonardo had confidence in his abilities.
[1.ii.iii.]

Leonardo was basically a Christian, but did not espouse the

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[3] Clark: Leonardo da Vinci: p. 18.

[4] Vasari: Life of Leonardo: p.256.

contemporary *religious tradition.* Leonardo's religion is as elusive and complicated as the rest of him. He drew a definite line between his private religion and the outward show of public belonging. He placed his personal faith in nature and experience, cause and effect, and the ultimate good of the Universe. It was distrust of mental speculation for the sake of it which distanced him from the Platonic School run by Marsilio Ficino in Florence. Cerebral speculation by itself was less than adequate as a method of understanding nature. He observed for himself that the Sun was the greatest and most powerful body in the universe. He wrote: "All vital force descends from it since the heat that is in living creatures comes from the soul (vital spark); and there is no other light or heat in the universe." [F.5r.][5] Leonardo's supreme God was not anthropomorphic. It was the sun, design, force or power, universal law. He believed absolutely in experience, experience of all nature through the senses. All his work shows his desire to get to grips with the forces and processes of nature.
Leonardo found a reality that did not betray or hurt or demand, that is, nature and experience. The reality of human behaviour was often unreliable, and he felt that man was impotent against the forces of nature. [1.ii.iv.]

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[5] Richter: Leonardo's Notebooks: p. 55.

The Church's *institutional standing* in Leonardo's day could be equated with working for a rich corporation. For the senior members of the organization, there was considerable luxury and privilege. The Bishops and Cardinals were minor princes in their own rights, with estates and art collections and retainers suitable to their degrees. The Vatican was one of the richest, patronizing and prestigious "courts" in Italy. [1.ii.v.]

2.i. Shaping Experience or Context.

It is possible that Leonardo's experience of being accused of "bad relations", or sodomy, had a profound effect on him. When the sordid matter was in train, he applied to several powerful friends for help, and they made it quite clear that they did not want to get involved. After that, Leonardo systematically eliminated all reference to close relationships and personal feelings. There is very little to be gleaned from contemporary sources either. He became truly independent. He asked no favours, and his personal life appears to be above reproach. When young, he was occasionally financially embarrassed, but he looked after his money wisely, and this "dependence" vanished too. [2.i.i.]

2.ii. Identity.

Ability and environment *drove Leonardo to excel* as he did. Universality was the ideal of the day, and Leonardo's abilities fitted excellently into the prescribed pattern. Painting was considered the highest of arts, and he was able to ascribe to himself the noblest of professions, though the number of his artworks is small. [2.ii.i.]

Leonardo tried very hard NOT to take on religious or *ideological stances* towards his work. He adopted the Greco/medieval model of the Cosmos, but he did not hesitate to think for himself. It was, rather, a framework from which to start his observations. [2.ii.ii.]

Leonardo was a loner by nature, and his work was really for his own edification and enjoyment. He had no *strongly corporate sense*, and he was not troubled with communicating his knowledge to others. The fact that his paintings like the *Last Supper, the Madonna[s] of the Rocks, the Mona Lisa*, are universal works of art is due to his own desire to express something perfectly in its entirety, and not because he was concerned to change the level of being in an observer, or express Christianity. The symbolism he used went well beyond that of his religion and culture, especially in his later works, but he painted them for himself, in that they were a test of his own powers of

expression. He was satisfying himself with the execution of such works. However, he was quite normally social, he had friends in all walks of life, from dukes to chimney-sweeps. Leonardo enjoyed excellent social status. [2.ii.iii.]

He maintained a low religious profile, he did not antagonize the church. He matched the church against his own abilities and vulnerability and found enough, via commentaries like Albertus Magnus on Aristotle to sustain belief in the value of the Bible, if not in all the Biblical stories. He was at ease with the transcendental concept, with the incorruptibility of the vital force, and this transcendent cosmos he found *trustworthy*. He saw the real world as linked but separate from the huge cosmos (and Sun), and organic life all too prone to corruption, disease and death. To this he *belonged*. So although he believed that natural beings were informed by a constant and unchanging vital force, the physical manifestation was subject to change and decay. He had no doubt about the reality of the material world, imperfect though it was. [3.i.]

Leonardo *conceptualized* the ideal. He used Biblical *symbols* to convey the expressions, for example, ideal maternity, and the states of being of apostles at *The Last Supper* are totally understood and academically perfect. But we have no idea of

how, in his understanding of Nature, he coped with personal emotion. He could experience very strong feelings - his early sketches prove it. But the artist himself is quite detached, and we gain no clue to Leonardo's personality. [3.ii.]

His desire for knowledge and understanding dominated his *mode of engagement*. Once he had his intellectual structures in place, so to speak, he was set to explore nature, knowledge, and indeed himself, on his own terms. He tried to *conceptualize a total reality* always from an experiential base. Leonardo stood back from himself and his experience in his last pictures. They contain a mysterious beckoning and calling. They suggest an elusive area to tread which was still veiled - available, undeniable, experience-able, non-human, and more than intellectual. [3.iii.]

Leonardo's *blind spots* were admirably concealed by himself. He turned his weakness (homosexuality) into a strength. He left no debts, no enemies, no children, no real clue to his personality.

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CHAPTER THREE

REMBRANDT VAN RIJN

PARTS I, II, III.

CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

REMBRANDT VAN RIJN

PART I

Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn was born on July 15, 1606 in Leiden, Holland, the eighth child in the family. There is no reason to suppose that his childhood was in any way different from the religious and cultural norms of the time. Dutch religion was a family affair; the family was the source of all religious life, and parents exercised much more authority than nowadays, which, of course, the Reformed Church confirmed. Rembrandt's mother taught him to pray and began his religious education - she demonstrated the personal simple form of devotion practiced in seventeenth-century Holland. There were prayers and a Bible reading every day, and Rembrandt saw the stories as real and contemporary.

His father was a miller, well-to-do enough to send Rembrandt to a Latin school when he was found to be very intelligent. After Latin School he enrolled in the University of Leiden, but did not

attend classes. All he wanted to do was paint, and so he was apprenticed to van Swanenburg in Leiden (of whose tuition Rembrandt showed no trace at all), soon to go and study under Peter Lastman in Amsterdam for six months. Peter Lastman was a renowned painter of historical scenes, and the historical genre became one of Rembrandt's major strengths.

Rembrandt returned to Leiden where he had a studio with Jan Lievens. They were visited there in 1626 by Christiaan Huygens, the remarkable scientist, statesman, and art collector, who said in his autobiography that he suggested that Rembrandt and Lievens study in Italy, "for if they became familiar with Raphael and Michelangelo, they would reach the heights of painting. The two young artists said that now, in the flower of their youth, they had no time for travel. Moreover, the finest Italian works can be seen in Holland; paintings which one would have to look for in Italy in many different places are massed together in great abundance outside of Italy." Huygens further said: "For myself, I'll wager to pass this superficial judgement on them, that Rembrandt surpasses Lievens in taste and liveliness of feeling, but that the latter exceeds the former in a certain imaginative grandeur and boldness of subjects and figures. For while (Lievens) already strives in his young heart for everything elevated and beautiful, he paints the forms before him life-size

24 *Saskia as Flora*, 1634

or preferably even larger; the other (Rembrandt), completely absorbed in his own work, likes to concentrate on smaller paintings and to achieve in a little space an effect that one seeks for in vain the colossal canvases of others."[1]

Rembrandt left again for Amsterdam in 1631. He stayed with Hendrik van Uylenburgh, a successful art dealer, and he married Saskia, van Uylenburgh's niece, in June, 1634. Saskia was reasonably dowered. Rembrandt at this time was earning very well as a portrait painter, and they bought themselves a large house in the Jewish Quarter. They started out enthusiastically as young married couples do, but Saskia lost four out of five children, became iller and iller, and she died in 1642. Her surviving child was Titus, born in September, 1641. She made a will a week before her death leaving her capital to Titus, but the income to Rembrandt until such time as he re-married. With his extravagant propensities he could never afford to re-marry- money was the bane of his life. This does not mean that Rembrandt was poor and obscure. On the contrary, his list of household possessions shows him to have been a man of consequence, and the house he later moved to certainly was not much less than the one he left.

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[1] Encyclopedia Britannica: Vol.15: Rembrandt: p.653.

After Saskia's death he stayed in the large house in Breestraat, and had in two housekeepers. The first was Geertge Dircx, a simple farm girl, to whom he must have promised marriage. In 1647 Hendricke Stoffels, who was "indeed one of the sweetest companions a great artist has ever had"[2] joined the Rembrandt household. Geertge Dircx sued Rembrandt for breach of marriage promise, and the court obliged Rembrandt to pay her 200 guilders per annum for life. He was still paying it when he died. The case took place in 1649, and there are no known works done by Rembrandt during this year. Hendrickje obviously superseded Geertge quite quickly - she had a daughter Cornelia (Rembrandt's mother's name - all his daughters were christened Cornelia) in 1654. In 1656 Rembrandt declared himself bankrupt. In July an inventory of his possessions filled some 360 columns, which were auctioned off in 1657 and 1658. In 1660 Rembrandt signed a contract which stipulated that Hendrickje and Titus were the sole owners of his paintings and possessed exclusive control of sales. He must have been hopelessly extravagant. In 1663 Hendrickje died. In February 1668 Titus married his aunt's niece, Magdelena van Loo, but he died in September. His daughter Titia was born posthumously in March 1669. Rembrandt himself died on October 4, 1669.

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[2] Kenneth Clark: An Introduction to Rembrandt, p. 86.

Like Bach, Rembrandt did not travel outside his immediate areas, in fact Bach moved about more than Rembrandt. But the unique situation of Amsterdam, a free port and the commercial hub of Europe, meant that Rembrandt must have seen most of the "treasures" in and passing through the Netherlands. Hendrik van Uylenburg imported fine art from all over the world.

Rembrandt seemed to be completely unconcerned with political happenings. With the exception of his *Claudius Civilis*- really a history painting - which was commissioned to celebrate a military victory, he did nothing in this line. He painted one allegorical picture, with Holland represented as a chained lion and the five shields of the Low Countries displayed behind it. It is not one of his best paintings. Issues like reformation of the church, religious freedom, growth of trade, (which included many original and wild get-rich-quick schemes which bordered on the lunatic), keeping Holland above water, art, music and the theatre were more important. Vondel, the Dutch equivalent of Shakespeare, was writing at this time. His plays were a very important part of the Dutch cultural scene, and there are drawings as evidence that Rembrandt regularly went to the theatre.

Rembrandt took advantage of Amsterdam's sophisticated trading by

10. Rembrandt, *The Actor in the Rôle of Bishop Gozewijn in his Dressing-room.* Chatsworth Settlement.

amassing a fine collection of drawings, paintings, costumes, etc. He owned, over the years, works by Titian, Michelangelo, Bibera, Vecchio, Raphael, Bassano, Giorgione, Bruegel the elder, German and Flemish work, Holbein, Durer, van Dyck, Mantegna, Carracci, Jacques Callot. His contemporaries, like Lievens, were well represented, and he kept several notebooks of his own drawings. He collected cloth, Chinese and Japanese lacquers, porcelains, bronzes, inlaid weapons and objects in copper, pewter, marble. And there are drawings of exotic animals which he must have watched being imported through Amsterdam. He frequented auctions and sales, and brought home anything bright or rich or unusual. There is one notable exception in his collecting, and that is books and manuscripts. Apparently at his death the only book in the house was his Bible. But he was certainly capable of reading Latin texts in the original.

There is no doubt that the acquisition of such treasures was why he was always so chronically short of money. His inability to manage money matters without help was compounded by his passion for collecting. He never quite paid for anything outside the artistic field, like his house, or loans, or food. It seems he was a master at rolling over his debts, issuing promissory notes of paintings and etchings for house-payment, loans, etc, which were always in arrears and never quite finished. He used to

pass them around! His entrepreneurial qualities are Dutch in the extreme, but not his attitude towards money. To him money was there to be used - he never saved a penny in his life. He used it ruthlessly for beautiful living. Ironically, one of his most cheerful self-portraits was painted when he had asked for a declaration of insolvency, and his household goods came under the hammer. He adjusted to very little with the greatest of ease. Descartes' description of the varied and dangerous commercial enterprises in Amsterdam would explain Rembrandt's last effort to save himself, by speculating in spices. The town councillors granted him the "cessio", and an inventory of Rembrandt's goods was taken on July 25 & 26, 1656. This extraordinary document reveals no material lack - there were kitchen utensils, linen, plates and dishes, furniture, it contains "the most beautiful, rarest and most costly objects: they brought together and summarized the tastes and passions of a man, who, although he never left his country, maintained a roving and adventurous spirit to the end of his days.... No art was foreign to him."[3]

But money continued to be a problem. After Hendrickje's death- she and Titus at one stage took over the financial affairs of the house - Rembrandt had to break open his daughter Cornelia's money-box to buy some food. He moved to the Jordaan quarter in

[3] Bonnier: p. 84

1658, and died there in 1669, the last one of his family except for his infant granddaughter Titia. He did not, contrary to popular report, die in poverty. He had pupils and patrons until the end of his life. He just never had any cash to spare for everyday living.

Everyone who cares for painting agrees that Rembrandt was one of the greatest artists who ever lived. He was naturally highly gifted in the technical skills of drawing and painting. To that gift he added intelligence, observation, honesty and compassion, and the results remind us of fundamental truths...".Because, ... he digs down to the roots of life; and he seems to open his heart to us. We have the feeling that he is keeping nothing back," says Kenneth Clark.[4]

REMBRANDT'S PROTESTANTISM:

Rembrandt's personal brand of religion is obscure. He was brought up in a God-fearing household, and he loved the Bible and its stories. He returned to his favourites frequently, for example Tobit & Anna, and the Supper at Emmaus, and some of the episodes in his life are illustrated in terms of the Bible, for example Bathsheba. He remained firmly attached to both Old and New Testaments. But although he undoubtedly knew the texts well,

[4] K.Clark: Introduction to Rembrandt: p.11.

he persistently left out or added conventional symbols or elements of the stories. Bathsheba was always holding a letter, and Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane was never drawn with his symbolic cup, which is contrary to artistic custom. His belief was strong, but undogmatic. G.K. Chesterton said that the trouble with Protestants was not that every man read *the* Bible, but that every man read *his* Bible - which is exactly what Rembrandt did. It is inevitable that he discussed the meaning of many passages with the people he painted, preachers, scholars, doctors, Mennonites, and with his neighbours the Jews. But in the end it was *his* Bible he illustrated, and his own interpretation of the Divine. Studying his work, one feels that for him the supernatural or divine is not often seen in this world. Everything for him is fundamentally expressed in worldly terms. Divine qualities like compassion, conscious thought, choice of action, are made visible by him by powerful expression through the human medium, but the quality of divinity is only seen in certain drawings of Christ. His angels, for example, are strong, peasant and good-faced people with solid wings, all subject to gravity with the exception of a few unlikely cherubs, and he usually draws them when a presence as well as feelings must be conveyed. The contemporary dogmatic view of angels is laid down in the *Statenbijbel*, (the Dutch Authorised Version of the Bible, 1637) which has a marginal note: Here the Work of God

THE EVANGELIST MATTHEW INSPIRED BY THE ANGEL. 1661. Canvas, 96×81 cm. Paris, Louvre. (Br. 614)

is attributed to an Angel, from which it may be understood that He is not a Creature of the Lord, but the Creator himself.[5] And the *Statenbijbel* again: Before His coming in the Flesh, Christ appeared to the Patriarchs in the form of an Angel, and was referred to as such. (Old Testament index, s.v. Christus.)[6] Rembrandt did not subscribe to this view. He used light beams instead when portraying Hagar and Ishmael. His angel's were not symbols of an un-incarnated Christ, they were messengers sent by God, not necessarily divine at all. Some of his critics call this practical realism "bourgeois" and "Calvinistic".

The quality of divinity in Christ is quantumly different from that of the angels he paints. Rembrandt evidently believed that Christ, and God (he has not, as far as is known, drawn the Holy Ghost) were divine, but angels were not necessarily so - the transcendental gap came after angels but before Jesus.

No great artist is entirely consistent. Rembrandt repudiated official values. He was as much in rebellion against the classical legacy of Rome as were the ancient Batavian leader

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[5] H.van de Waal: Steps towards REmbrandt: P.94.

[6] H. van de Waal: Steps towards Rembrandt: p.95.

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The Conspiracy of the Batavians (fragment), c. 1661-62

Canvas, 196 x 309 cm
Nationalmuseum, Stockholm (Br. 482)

Claudius Civilis and his friends,[7] particularly in the field of art. Kenneth Clark says that he turned to the ethos of Judaism, and to a large extent his rebellion illustrates the Judaic hymn which St. Luke puts into the mouth of the Virgin Mary: "He hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away."[8] For a man of his time, he was aware of the "common people" to a far far greater degree than most, indeed he was one of them. He refused to accept unquestioned the antique classical values, which he felt ignored the truth of the human condition. Equally, the Jewish tradition struck a chord in him - they knew more about real life than the Romans.

It has been suggested by several authorities that Rembrandt was a Mennonite, having left the Protestant Church. This "new religious movement" had been founded by Menno Simons, an ordained Roman Catholic priest who questioned the real presence of Christ

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[7] Tacitus, *The Histories* II, Trans. by Moore, Loeb Classical Library, London, 1931, pp. 25-9. "Civilis called the leaders of his tribe and the boldest of the common people into a scared grove under the pretext of giving a banquet, and when he saw that the night and revelry had fired their spirits, he began to speak of the honour and glory of their tribe, then passed on to count over their wrongs.....His words won great applause, and he bound them all by their national oaths and barbarous rites."

[8] K. Clark: INtroduction to Rembrandt: p.60

in the bread and wine of the Eucharist. He apprehensively and daringly read his Bible and the writings of Martin Luther for the first time. One of Martin Luther's most important reforms was to "re-introduce" the Bible to believers - including priests. The Roman Catholic Church had limited the Bible's reading to a few scholars in the upper echelons of the Vatican. Menno soon believed, like Luther and Zwingli, that the Bible should be central in the life of a believer, and he became an Anabaptist, whose thought was characterised by a separation between religion and the world, belief in the Trinity, the Bible as final authority, baptism on confession of faith, which meant adult baptism in effect, non-conformity to the world, non-swearing of oaths, and non-resistance in lieu of military service. The radical Anabaptists and the state militia met head on in 1535 in a bloody battle, and this so horrified Menno that he preached against revolutionaries, and for pure doctrine, scriptural use of sacraments, ethical obedience, love of neighbour, witnessing to the faith, and a willingness to suffer, humility, forgiveness and poverty. The group which formed behind him became known as the Mennonites. They had no heirarchy, but accepted the leadership of honest men. In some ways they resembled the Quakers.

Baldinucci, (one of Rembrandt's earliest biographers) in his *Cominciamento* of 1686, does not use the official term

1 *The Hundred Guilder Print*, c. 1639–49

'Mennonite', but the popular one 'Mennist', when recalling Rembrandt's religious affiliations. Rembrandt's association with the Mennonites was closest for the period 1642 to 1646. He never signed up as an official member, but that does not mean that he was not sympathetic to their ideas. The Mennonites actively believed in and strove for the qualities of compassion and forgiveness. From about 1640 onwards all Rembrandt's illustrations of the Bible could be interpreted as reflecting to some extent Mennonite beliefs; and the first great example of this is the etching of *Christ Healing the Sick.* (Also called *The Hundred Guilder Print* because it was rumoured than when a print came up for sale, Rembrandt himself bought it back for the fabulous sum of 100 guilders.) [See Item 1] The print takes its point of departure from the lines of Mark 1:32-35: "That evening, after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was." This etching is a masterpiece of observation plus imaginative sympathy of ordinary people. It is drawn from Rembrandt's direct experience in Amsterdam. The setting is a dark street corner, which by no stretch of the imagination could be anywhere in Palestine, it is downtown Northern Europe. And the people are Dutch in cast and clothing,

apart from a few Middle-Eastern turbans. But for all that, it has perfect unity of atmosphere, it is perfectly in context, a timeless drawing. In Rembrandt's day, as in Christ's, there are a multitude of conditions which need healing, and he has drawn some of them here. There is a strong old mother bringing her prostrate adult child on a solid wheelbarrow. There is a rich gentleman stopping to watch during his evening stroll, there are the scribes gossiping and missing the great event, an alert dog with its child. The whole transition from dark to light has a wonderfully moving quality. Out of the stone archway men and women seem to spill and blunder into the light. Behind them in the archway is a camel, which seems inappropriate until we remember Christ's words, 'It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven': an example of the wealth of allusion in all Rembrandt's compositions. The figure of Christ, going as far in sentiment as is possible without sentimentality, comes as close to divinity as any of Rembrandt's drawings. His raised hand is extrarodinarily beautifully drawn. As one looks into this textual rendering, more and more is realized. This is a profoundly full religious statement of belief in Christ, his forgiveness and healing qualities, compassion and universality.

So far as Rembrandt's Mennonite tendencies go, H. van de Waal

makes a good case for Rembrandt studying a far more radical form of Protestantism.

Van de Waal calls this chapter "Rembrandt's Faust Etching: a Socinian Document, and the Iconography of the Inspired Scholar." He brings his considerable scholarship and knowledge of Rembrandt's Holland to bear. [See Item 2] The authenticity and title of this etching have never been questioned, but this print is not necessarily that of the Faustian legend, in spite of its official title. Van de Waal writes that this etching very possibly portrays one of the founders of the more extreme new sects, started by two 16th century Sienese noblemen, uncle and nephew named Socini, who left Italy and finally found adherents (protestant) in Poland and Transylvania. They were persecuted there in the early 17th century, many fled to the Dutch Republic, where they were known as the Polish Brethren.

"The Socinians denied the Divinity of Jesus Christ, the existence of the Holy Ghost, original sin, the atonement of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of sinners, the resumption of the same bodies that the faithful had during life on earth. Their public meetings are banned..."[9] is a contemporary description of their

[9] "Les Sociniens nient la Divinite du Jesus-Christ, l'exsistence du Saint Esprit, le peche originel, la satisfaction de Jesus-Christ, la resurrection des mechans, le retablissement

doctrine, which is far far fiercer than that of Menno Simons, and too fierce even for Holland.

The print shows a scholarly man standing at his desk, thoughtfully and without fear contemplating a shining disk suspended in front of the window, bearing the monogram of Christ, INRI, surrounded by two concentric rings with the following inscriptions: ADAM + TE + DAGERAM, and + AMRTET + ALGAR + ALGASTNA++. There is a mirror beside the disk, a discernible hand pointing to the mirror from below, another hand, less clear, supporting it.

In 1957, Dr. H.M.Rotermund pointed out other occurrences of the inscriptions on the disk which proved them to be traditional formulae associated with magic amulets and hosts. He connects the word AGLA with the ancient Cabbalistic *notarikon* AGLA. Honnecourt, one of the only architects of Gothic Cathedrals known by name, used it in his sketchbook, and the artist Jan van Eyck painted it into *The Ghent Altar.*

"The etching has been listed in catalogues as Dr. Faustus since

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des mesmes corps que les fidelles ont eu pendant leur vie dans le monde. Leurs assemblees publiques sont defendues..."
J.B. Stouppe: La religion des Hollandois, Paris 1673, pp.75-76.

5. Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Luther as St. Matthew*, 1529.

1731, but dissatisfaction with this traditional title has steadily increased because the print bears no indication either of a temptation by Satan or of an evocation both of which are essential elements of the Faust legend..."[10], which is that the sorcerer treated with Satan, and his guardian angel intervened to warn him. The etching is of a man standing in scholarly contemplation of Christ's monogram, which is very difficult to equate with Satan or a mere guardian angel. It is thought that the devout scholar is a pansophist, or an adept of some esoteric sect. There are no accoutrements of the alchemists' trade drawn, even the skull is too universal a symbol of death to be confined to sorcerers and alchemists.

There is a precedent for the mirror being held up as a device which is used to reflect divine inspiration. Lucas Cranach made four woodcuts of the Evangelists for Luther's translation of the New Testament, published by Hans Lufft in Wittenberg in 1529. [See Item 3] St. Matthew (who looks very like Luther), is studying at his desk while an angel, one of St. Matthew's attributes, is holding a mirror by which the rays of the Holy Ghost, symbolised by a dove, are directed on to the saint. The implication is that St. Matthew and Luther both worked under divine inspiration.

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[10] H.van de Waal: Steps towards Rembrandt: p.133.

Rembrandt's *Dr. Faustus* etching is unique in that the scholar's attention is directed outwards to an external object or light rather than inward-turning on his book, work or thoughts. In addition, he is depicted standing up, or rising from his chair. A new concentration has been engendered, focussed on the symbol. In these respects it is markedly different from Cranach's St. Matthew who continues quietly writing, in spite of the spiritual activity round him.

"Despite the compositional similarities between the two prints, however, there is also a striking difference: in Cranach's woodcut we see the dove of the Holy Ghost, in Rembrandt's etching the monogram of Christ surrounded by magic formulae. This leads us to ask - again provisionally, as part of a working hypothesis - who in 17th Century Amsterdam would have had reason to represent someone, say a Christian theologian as a second Luther working under the inspiration, not of the Holy Ghost, but of what to us remains a somewhat mysterious anagram. Of all the various sects in the theological monarchists, Cabbalistic Alchemists or Pansophists, Pre-Adamites, Socinians and Rosicrucians - the one group that springs to mind in this connection is the antitrinitarian sect of the Socinians:"[11]

[11] H. van de Waal: Steps towards Rembrandt: p.137

H van de Waal's hypothesis is that:

1. Rembrandt's print is in its composition a variant of Cranach's Luther illustration with the essential difference that the dove of the Holy Ghost is replaced by a monogram of Christ.

2. The sect whose ideas seem closest to the theological content is that of the Socinians, who were persecuted even in the Dutch Republic.

The hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that Socinus the nephew, who died in Poland in 1604, bore the Christian name of Faustus, and it seems even more likely that the print may be meant to represent Dr. Faustus Socinus as a Second Luther when we read in his epitaph that in the purging of the church - referred to as the demolition of the 'Babylonian' edifice - Luther had managed to destroy the roof and Calvin the walls, but Socinus had destroyed the foundations:

Tota Licet Babylon destruxit tecta Lutherus
Calvinus muros sed fundamenta Socinius. [12]

It seems, then, that the original commission for the print (which

[12] H van de Waal: Steps towards Rembrandt: p. 139.

ITEM 4

THE RAISING OF THE CROSS. Canvas, 96×72 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. (Br. 548)

may have been intended as the title-page of a Socinian book that was probably never published) could very well have stipulated an ideal portrait of Faustus Socinus as a second Luther contemplating Christ.

The family Boreel lived next door to Rembrandt. Adam Boreel, brother of Rembrandt's neighbour, was a practising Socinian. Adam Boreel sounds rather eccentric. He was the scion of a distinguished family, who was versed in Hebrew, who lived for some time as a hermit in a hut and who was said to have thrown away vast sums of money in trying to find the Philosopher's Stone. The brothers were both pro-Jewish, in fact one tried to convert, publish Menasseh Ben Israel's edition of the Mischna, (who must too have been a close neighbour) and supported the building of a model of Solomon's Temple. Blaeu, the publisher, was also suspected of Socinian tendencies. Its spread was primarily amongst the nobility, in Poland and the Netherlands, its followers came from the more prosperous intellectual upper layer of society. This was different from the Mennonites who were more universal in appeal.

The Socinians were condemned as heretical, even in Holland. The governing bodies of several provinces passed edicts against this 'blasphemous and pernicious' belief, and in 1651-3, the very

ITEM 5

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS. Panel, 89·5×65 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. (Br. 550)

period from which Rembrandt's print must date, this campaign against the *Hydra Socinianismi* was intensified. In 1653 an edict against the 'Warsaw error' threatened all Socinians with banishment and a pamphlet of 1655 demanded '...whether the heretics and particularly those called Socinians should not be punished ... by death.'

In view of this, it is in the highest degree unlikely that Rembrandt belonged to this sect. There would have been an echo down the centuries if he had. Rembrandt would have found the Mennonites more sympathetic, because radicalism and revolution were uncomfortable for him. He was always aware of the "abyss" between God the Father, or the Divinity, and the flawed and struggling world. Jesus was mortal, but he was divine when practicing compassion and forgiveness at optimum levels. He displays this philosophy in his work. In his painting *The Raising of the Cross*, [See Item 4:] the body of Jesus is lit, stretched taut with pain and the face is agonised, all too human. *The Descent from the Cross* [See Item 5:] is painted from the perspective of grief. The body of Jesus is limp, dead, broken, mortal- human remains. Both paintings are aware of the gravity of what has happened, but they are rooted firmly in the human condition. In them Christ's divinity has gone. Equally, Jesus has divine qualities in Rembrandt's *Supper at Emmaus*,.

49 *The Death of the Virgin.* 1639

It is difficult to see where the Holy Ghost could fit in to Rembrandt's philosophy. He did not, as far as known, ever try to render it in paint. A further example of his "realism" as opposed to "ideal spiritualism" is his etching, *Death of the Virgin*, dated 1639. [See Item 6] The dying woman does not look up to heaven (and some substantial floating cherubs) with certainty of salvation, on the contrary, her head has slumped pitifully on its pillow, one of the Apostles wipes her lips, while another takes her pulse. And there is a huge contrast between the agonised woman holding the pole of the bed and the two sitting on the steps with their backs to the death bed, who are enjoying a good gossip.

It is known from Rembrandt's relations with Menasseh ben Israel that in later life he was quite prepared to accept controversial commissions, and that he was trustworthy with idealistic convictions which set people apart from the accepted norm. Menasseh's father was tortured by Spanish inquisition three times before escaping to Amsterdam, where he died in 1622. Menasseh's main task was to teach the arriving refugees from Spanish and Portugese Inquisitions the faith of their forefathers. No jewish community can exist without books, and he set up a publishing house, which could handle Hebrew text. He

published 60 works by various authors, and 11 of his own, which lead eventually to Amsterdam becoming the centre of Jewish printing. He was an erudite and highly respected member of the community. Rembrandt loved painting Jews. "He saw in them repositories of ancient wisdom and an unchanging faith, and found in their faces a look of melancholy, as of one who remembers a far-distant past and foresees an uncertain future - which is more than could be said of his countrymen."[13] Quite true. His portraits of Dutch people show hard-headed, discreet, successful gentlemen, who know exactly where they are and what they want, while his portraits of Jews look far more "life-experienced."

Menassah ben Israel asked Rembrandt, a neighbour of his, living opposite him in Jodenbreestraat, to provide four illustrations for his Piedra Gloriosa (The Glorious Stone) which he was going to dedicate to Isaac Vossius. It was an apocalyptic treatise based on Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, linked together by the stone that 'was cut out without hands' and 'smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay' (Daniel 2:34), the stone Jacob used for a pillow when he dreamed of the angels of God ascending and descending on the ladder reaching to heaven (Genesis 28: 11, 12), the stone with which David smote Goliath (1 Sam 17:49), and Daniel's vision of the

[13] K. Clark: Steps towards Rembrandt: P.90.

four great beasts that came up from the sea, symbolising the four kings, which shall arise out of the earth' (Daniel 7:3, 17). Rembrandt must have studied the texts carefully, and taken the trouble to find out the implications of prophecy and portrayal. He did the etchings, and they were obviously difficult and unsatisfactory for him. They are not up to the usual standard of interpretation or execution. After Manesseh's death, they were changed. What this illustrates is that Rembrandt knew and interacted with his Jewish neighbours, with sufficient intimacy to speak about religion, philosophy and world views.

ITEM 8

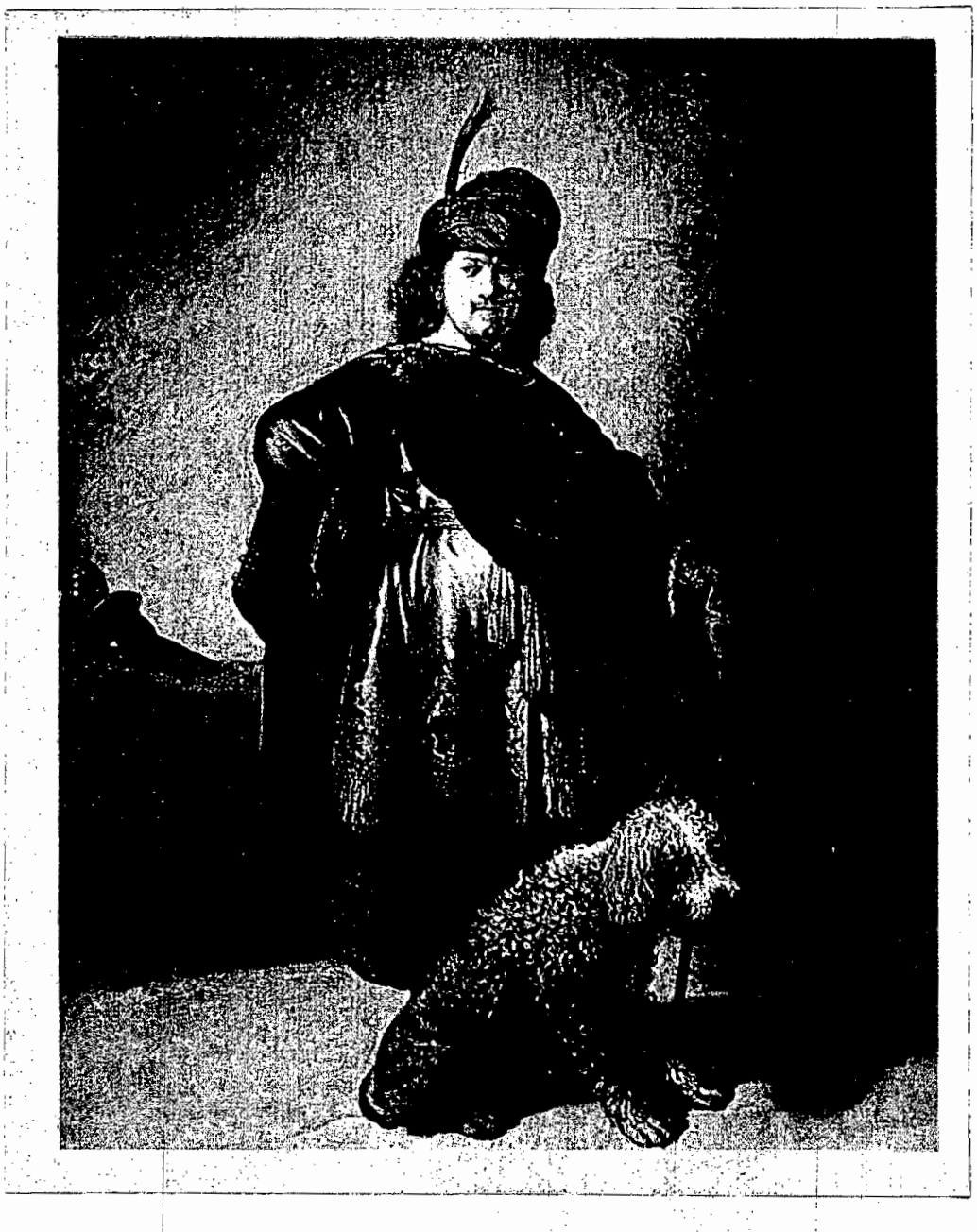
SELF-PORTRAIT. 1630. Panel, 49×39 cm. Aerdenhout, near Haarlem, Jhr. J. H. Loudon. (Br. 9)

REMBRANDT VAN RIJN

PART II

REMBRANDT'S TECHNIQUES:

Rembrandt spent the whole of his life polishing skills which helped to render the highest and deepest moments of the human condition in paint. The word 'emotion' is not used because what he strived to show was very much more than strong feelings. It is the concentration of the whole being in moments of compassion, tenderness, love, betrayal, anticipation, judgement, fear, reversal of fortune, success and acheivement. And death. In order to express all this in his drawings, etchings, and paintings, Rembrandt acquired a variety of techniques which he used to optimum advantage. For example, he painted self-portraits throughout his life. He was always peering intently into himself, it helped him understand everyone else. We see him young, cocksure and arrogant, showing off, dressing up. He experimented with his own face angry, or frowning, laughing, surprised. He used his own face for practice. [See Item 8:] At first he simply made faces at himself, and as he got older the inward turning examination got more detached and more profound. His nose was large and bulbous, and remained so, his sensuous lips got thinner, but his eyes became more penetrating and



dominant. He was driven on by a passion to set down every shape, area, tone and colour exactly as he saw it interpreted by the being of the model. He had concluded that human beings must be accepted exactly as they are. That is how he found them in the Bible - without extenuation or disguise. Rembrandt approached all his sitters in this way, beginning with himself. This method - people being what they are, without extenuation or disguise- remained fairly normal until this century, when people became image-conscious. There was less demand for persiflage in the seventeenth century. Few indeed disguised their origins or tried to be something they were not. Play-acting was something confined to the theatre. Rembrandt was very theatrical, and he used it in full consciousness, on suitable occasions. So, incidentally, did Churchill.

Just before he married Saskia he painted a full-length portrait of himself, richly dressed, extended hand resting on a cane, turbanned and feathered, with a beautiful dog in front of him. [See Item 9:] It shows definitely that he was a small man, probably not much more than 5 foot, maybe less, but stocky and very much present. Over the years he appears as grand, laughing, ill, world-weary (that one was commissioned by the Grand Duke Cosimo III de'Medici), and the last one, painted the year he died, is one of the most gently sad and withdrawing portraits in

33 *Self-portrait, 1669. Mauritshuis, The Hague*

the world. Kenneth Clark has this to say about the self-portraits:

"But with this whole-hearted engagement [his total immersion in human life] went an equally great detachment, the two sides of his character mingling as imperceptibly as the two sides of a spinning disc. This is what makes his self-portraits unique. His appetite for life urged him to gobble up his own image, but his detachment freed him from all the evasions, excuses and self-pity which are the normal human reaction to that clamourous, irrepressible thing - the self."[1]

And this detachment too, he used to help portray what he wanted to paint. He did not only use it in self-portraits. His sitters, commissioned or voluntary, were chosen from virtually every walk of life of the known world. Like Picasso later, he tried every known genre of painting. H. van de Waal points out that ALL his drawings and sketches are of the poor, "beggars, street-pedlars, Jews, but none are noted of the tradesmen in guild costumes, which are no less picturesque."[2] But this was his practice and his raw material. He did finished portraits of the prominent and wealthy in Amsterdam, in sober black and white clothes, and then he would break out and paint Saskia aas Flora,

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[1] K.Clark: Introduction to Rembrandt: p.37/38.

[2] H.van de Waal: Steps towards Rembrandt: p.56.

or Juno, himself as a standard bearer, Geerte Dircx as Danai, or a man in oriental costume, all in the richest and most lavish clothes and props. He loved the grand, dramatic and colourful.

When the old Town Hall burnt down, Rembrandt went to draw the ruins, completely ignoring the "8th wonder of the modern" world being built, the New Town Hall, to the chagrin of contemporary critics.

"He accosts with his dark lantern the world of the marvellous, of conscience and the ideal. He has no equal in the power of showing the invisible." said Fromentin, the nineteenth century painter and author. [3]

And Roger Fry, in his *Arts and Painting and Sculpture*, 1932, said: "Rembrandt has a unique place in the history of European art because he united in his spirit a dramatic and psychological imagination of Shakespearean intensity, and an equally great plastic imagination. In his early work the illustration of psychological conceptions sometimes spoils the complete formal unity, but in his later years he accomplished a perfect fusion of

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[3] T. Coppleston: Rembrandt: P.88.

the two elements in his imaginative life." [4]

H. van de Waal says that Rembrandt rejected the "unlimited possiblities inherent in the Renaissance system of perspective", and by abandoning the elaboration of backgrounds and space, achieved a greater spiritual depth time and time again.[5]

Whether he abandoned the "elaboration of backgrounds and space" or not, and many of Rembrandt's backgrounds are pure theatre, and his compositions would often work very well on a stage. H. van de Waal has tried to establish that Rembrandt and Vondel were acquainted, but it appears that if they were, they did not get on. However, it is inconceivable that they were not aware of each other.

Alpers suggests that Rembrandt got his students to act out the various scenes they were painting, to emphasize things like betrayal and the theatricality of the emotions portrayed - a sort of exaggeration of what really happened.[6] But it is not so much "exaggeration" as heightening the tensions between the subjects

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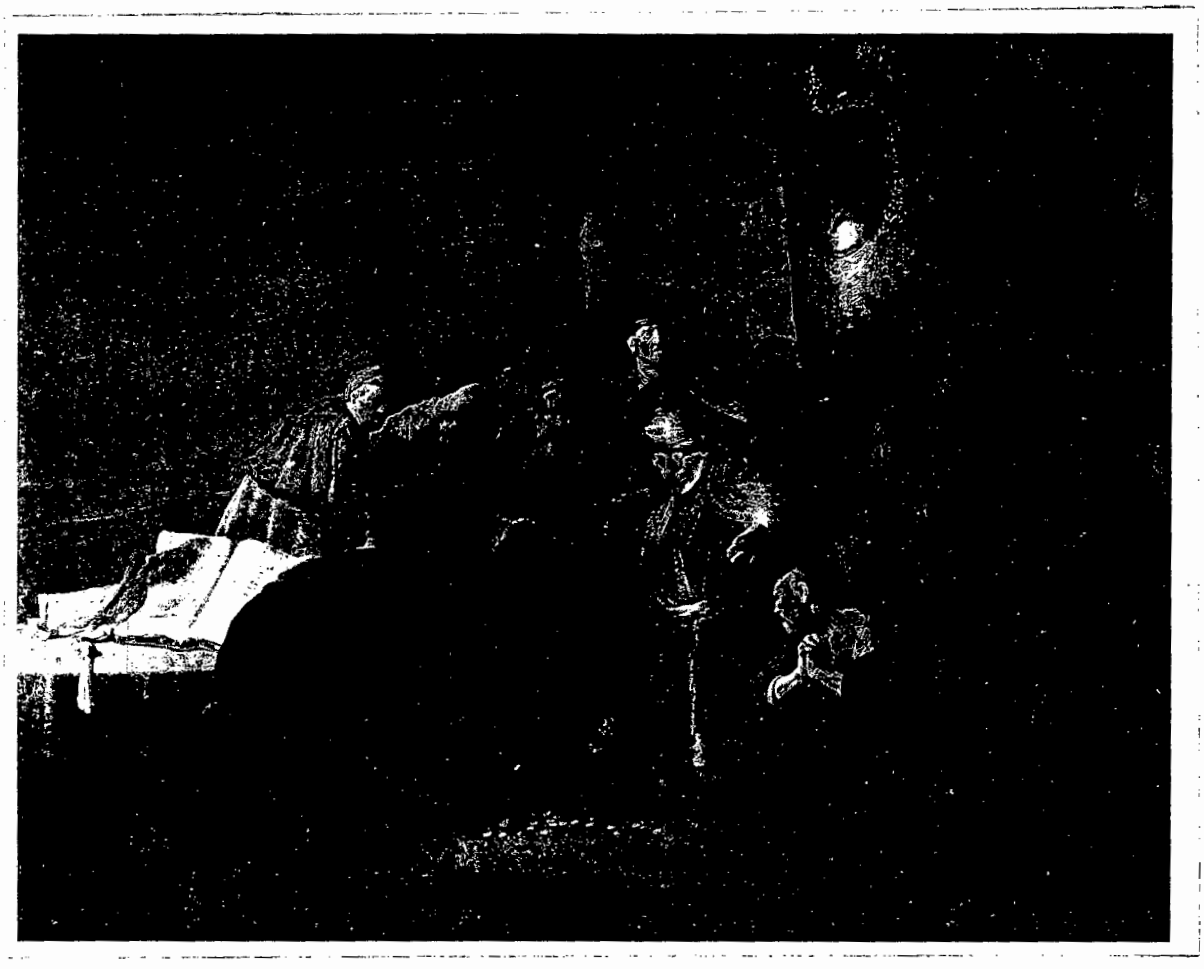
[4] T. Coppleston: Rembrandt: P. 87.

[5] H.van de Waal: Steps towards Rembrandt: p.9.

[6] Alpers, Svetlana. Rembrandt's Enterprise. 1988. p.34.



ITEM 10

to maximise on expressive communication. Notable pictures, all dramatic moments which have a past and a future, are *Simon in the Temple, The Wedding of Samson, The Wedding of Jason & Reason, Suzanna and the Elders, The Conspiracy of Claudius Civilis,* and most of all, *Judas Returning the 30 pieces of Silver. [See Item 10:]* His "wild face, torn hair, rent raiment, contorted arms, hands so tightly clasped as to check the flow of blood - thrown to his knees by heedless vehemence - his whole body twisted by the pitiful fierceness of feelings..." says Christiaan Huygens, who saw it contemporarily, and: "I am struck dumb by it. What this young man, a miller's son, a beardless boy, has done in summing up various emotions in one figure and depicting them as a single whole! Bravo Rembrandt!". The figure of Judas is more than a marvellous dramatic invention. He has flung the 30 pieces of silver across the floor, where they glint accusingly at him and the priests. The priests' absolute rejection of Judas' mortal agony and repentance renders him the most lonely man in the cosmos.

An early painting which could be construed as over-theatrical is the *Blinding of Samson.* Rembrandt painted this for Christiaan Huygens, who had commissioned work from both Rembrandt and Lievens (Rembrandt's studio companion), and there is no doubt that his patronage was valuable. Huygens tried to decline the

gift, but Rembrandt insisted he accept it. One wonders why Rembrandt was so insistent, and also at his success. Christiaan Huygens was an extremely prominent and powerful citizen. *The Blinding of Samson* is an extremely disturbing picture, to the point of bad taste. Only a man of genius could have done anything so consistently horrifying. "Apart from the revolting realism of the actual blinding, every detail, every hand and foot, is ugly in itself. The silhouette of the man on the left has the same character of designed horror. His trousers are like the hideous legs of Jacobean sideboards. But as a feat of pictorial imagination it is appallingly effective. A wave of light, which seems to have burst through a broken dam, overwhelms the miserable Samson, and then is gone from him for ever. The grotesque Halberdier, pointing his weapon at the fallen giant like a stoker, looks at his victim with a startled compassion; he has the shagginess and irregularity of the North. The men who blind Samson and put out his eyes are from the South, and are, in fact, reminiscences of the guards in Raphael's liberation of St. Peter. They are concentrating relentlessly on their task. And what about Delilah? No brutality, not even an obvious look of triumph. Just excitement, as if she had won a game." says Kenneth Clark.[7]

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[7] K. Clark: Steps towards Rembrandt: p.50.

153 *Titus*, c. 1655

Rembrandt is famous for his of dark and light in paintings. Rembrandt's chiaruoscuro was essentially a method of composition, like counterpoint in music, and in the same way that any theme or melody can be treated according to the laws of counterpoint, so any subject can be portrayed acording to the laws of chiaruoscuro, whether there is any artifical light involved or not.[8] But again, Rembrandt experimented and mastered chiaruoscuro as a tool, to be used to achieve his ultimate goal, rather as a scientist repeats experiments until he has a true result. Religious symbols generate a light of their own, for example in *Belshazzar's Feast* the writing that appears on the wall is a light source. (And the Hebrew signs are correct and written in the right direction too). He used lighting to heighten drama and impact, notably in the *Conspiracy of Claudius Civilis.*

Rembrandt would often place his subject in the zone where light meets dark. He loved drawing people at windows and doors, the dark behind them out of which they have come. In the wonderful portrait of his son, *Titus at a Desk* (1655), Titus is placed on the borderline between light and dark, which adds force and credibility of a boy pondering a problem - the pensive state

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[8] H.van de Waal: Steps towards Rembrandt: p.14.

ITEM 12

between the light of understanding the realm of the obscure.[9] "...it is obvious that he has deliberately placed himself, as a human being, on the border between light and dark, thus demonstrating once again his profound vision of the human condition,...." , i.e. individuals emerge from the darkness and evolve towards light. John Ruskin, the 19th Century English critic, was less than sympathetic to Rembrandt's use of light: "I cannot feel it an entirely glorious speciality to be distinguished, as Rembrandt was, from other great painters, chiefly by the liveliness of his darkness and the dullness of his light. It is the aim of the best painters to paint the noblest things they see by sunlight. It was the aim of Rembrandt to paint the foulest things he could see - by rushlight."[10] But one must remember that Rembrandt's paintings were given regular coats of brown varnish in those days. Its a miracle they could see anything at all, rushlight or not.

Moments of revelation caught Rembrandt's attention. The most dramatic of all angelic interventions was the rescue of Isaac, and the very last moment. The angel is only just in time to cause Abraham to drop his knife. [See Item 12:] And in *Balshazzar's Feast* the party has been suspended suddenly and

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[9] H.van de Waal: Steps towards Rembrandt: p.15.

[10] J. Ruskin: Cestus of Aglaia, 1864.

ITEM 15

It is in his self portraits that he seems to have recognised all that was tragic in human life, and set it down with humility and resignation. He does not glory in suffering; he simply accepts it, or rather the visible evidence of it; and in so doing he achieves a spiritual dignity which is denied to the prosperous and the proud, however great their gifts. His portraits are Christian, in the sense that under no other system of belief could sinful and suffering man have reached such heights. Not that Rembrandt gave himself airs as a saint or prophet. On the contrary, he viewed himself as just as fallible and prone to mistakes as the next man, and with a certain amount of humorous disillusion. Kenneth Clark goes further: "I said earlier that Rembrandt's imagination was combined with a powerful mind. This portrait [See Item 14:] reminds me of one of the great faces of our century, the face of Albert Einstein", when he says Rembrandt can go further into the human psyche than we realize. He was more dependent on compassion than on strength. But he brought the same individual mode of engagement to his commissioned portraits too, that of portraying without extenuation or disguise, the detached observance allied with great compassion and sympathy. The backgrounds reinforce the characters, as well as the businesses, of his subjects.

totally, Balshazzar frozen in shock. [See Item 13:]

The Return of the Prodigal Son is a masterpiece of Godly forgiveness. [See Item 15:] The original oil is in Leningrad, and it is a painting of superlative compassion...[11]...we may agree that the gesture with which the father puts his hands on his son's soulders, while his kneeling son presses his head to his father's heart, has an archetypal grandeur and pathos, like some great religious image of the Early Middle Ages. .... This...work.. springs from very deep sources, but affects us immediately.

His favourite Bible stories were probably enriched by the Jewish traditional point of view. He saw characters in Biblical terms, for example Titus appears as Isaac, a soldier, an angel, his mother and father as Anna and Tobit (it is thought that Rembrandt's father was blind), and Hendrickje as Bathsheba. He saw the important turning points in lives and fortunes "which taken at the flood lead on to greater things", as well as the opportunities which are lost or have drastically changed, the rise and fall of a human psyche. His interpretation of the Bible came to be almost indistinguishable from his response to the life around him. His sketches of every day life around him can almost all be given Biblical parallels.

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[11] K.Clark: Steps towards Rembrandt: P. 137.

With his later self-portraits in mind, it was possible that Rembrandt was coming to grips with a greater truth, which could leave him at peace with the world. He is reaching to the fundamentals of life and permanence in an effort to understand- and express - the much greater picture, wherein "all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well". Art for him assumed a deeply religious importance, being his avenue to understanding life. He pondered on the Bible, national and classical history in order to gain insight and knowledge, which, put to practical use, enabled him to re-create scenes carrying the hall-mark of destiny. *The Jewish Bride* is a climax of Rembrandt's lifelong effort to combine the particular and the universal, and he has achieved his aim in two ways: by relating habitual and well-used gestures which have become symbolic to the deep-rooted recurring motives of human behaviour. And by seeing episodes in actual life as if they had been foreseen and explained by the Old Testament.

ETCHINGS

Rembrandt did two etchings of the Crucifixion called *The Three Crosses*, separated by ten years in time, and for identification called the Early State and Late State. [See items 16 & 17:] The Early State etching stays with Biblical texts, given heightened

poignancy and drama by Rembrandt's skills. A shaft of pure light streams down vertically on Jesus, two lesser streams highlight the robbers on each side of him, and illuminating the crowd gathered at the foot of the Cross. Behind the light, and round to the foreground, the world is convulsing. The adjective cataclysmic seems to apply. Jesus himself is isolated, above it all, suffering but triumphant. There is a world of difference between the body of Christ and the bodies of the two thieves, which are pitiful, defeated. On the one side, his family and disciples are dispairing and distraught. On the other side the Centurions ride by, unmoved, official, doing their duty, except for the one who recognised Jesus as the Son of God, and he is on his knees in wonder. In the full light there is one man prostrate, and another beating his breast. In the foreground two well-dressed men hurry away, followed by a dog, probably Joseph of Arimathea on his way to Pilate to ask for Jesus' body. In the foreground, only just caught by the light, are more people unmoved by the event, just watching the spectacle. Rembrandt very often has people in his works which remind us that many have no idea what is happening, a total unawareness of cataclysmic events. This etching is very powerful.

The Late State of *The Three Crosses* has been almost completely re-worked. The light still pours down, but there is less of it

and it is far less directed, and Christ appears more vulnerable, more matyred, though, again, above it all. The thief on the right has been darkened almost completely, as though a curtain has been drawn across him, which screens the mourners as well. The mourners are darkened, and in even deeper distress than in the first etching. The richly clothed man is hurrying to the point of running directly towards us. But the most radical change has been made in the Roman soldiers. Kenneth Clark says of these changes: "Gone is the kneeling centurion, the worldly, Raphaelesque element in the earlier design, and gone the indifferent soldiers. And in their place is a man on horseback whose weird profile is obviously derived from Pisanello's medal of Gian Francesco Gonzaga. By what stroke of inspiration did Rembrandt see this bizarre figure as adding something to the mystery of a darkened world? Did he feel in Pisanello's perfectly calculated profile a detachment which he could use as a symbol of loneliness? Did he feel, as in the Claudius Civilis, that some touch of the grotesque would heighten our feeling of the incomprehensible? The enormous hat seems to have grown in the night like a giant toadstool. It belongs to the non-human order; and yet the chinless head below it is human and touching in its feeling of resignation; and to give it greater poignancy, REmbrandt has adumbrated behind this passive, unclassical image one of the great symbols of classical energy, the horse-tamer of

the Quirinal. Once more he makes use of allusions and analogies which cannot be accounted for by coincidence, and which argue a deep understanding of the mechanism of the unconscious." [12]

Kenneth Clark is too profound an Art scholar to be mistaken in his recognition of Pisanello's medal of Gonzaga, or the horse-tamers of the Quirinal. A little historical research on Gonzaga and the Horse-tamers added considerably to Rembrandt's possible reasons for using such symbols.

Gian Franscesco Gonzaga (1394/5-1444) was a condottiere, or professional soldier, who was brilliant enough to be created Marquess of Mantua by Sigismund (1368-1437) the Holy Roman Emperor. As well as being a general, he was a statesman (he played Venice and Milan off against each other to preserve Mantua) and humanist, in that he started (1423), in Mantua, a school called La Giocosa which became a centre of humanist learning. He was general of the Antipope John XXIII's troops.

Since the 1378, there had been two popes, one in Avignon and one in Rome. A Council was called at Pisa to resolve this Great Schism, which had deposed both popes, Gregory XII and Benedict

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12 K. Clark: Steps towards Rembrandt: P.144.

XIII, by declaring them schismatic and heretics,and elected Alexander V, a Franciscan vowed to poverty who spent half the day at the meal table, kept a staff of 400 women in his own personal livery, and dispensed offices with truly astounding largesse. There were now three popes, as the first two refused to be deposed. Alexander V died after 10 months, supposedly poisoned by Baldassare Cossa, pirate, murderer, adulterer, blackmailer, who too was elected pope, calling himself John XXIII. It was doubtful he believed in God. He was a deacon, ordained priest one day, crowned pope next. These popes make Nero's court look like a mild form of entertainment. John XXIII called for a crusade against the King of Naples, who supported Pope Gregory XII. He promised indulgences to those who fought, and promised the various heads of state joining the crusade cuts and revenues from the indulgences. His troops for this campaign in 1411 were successfully led by Gian Francesco Gonzaga, Marquess of Mantua. Sigismund, the Holy Roman Emperor, insisted that another Council be called in Constance to resolve the matter of multiple popes, and it was convened in 1414.

In Czechoslovakia, whose sovereign was Wenceslas, there was a man called Jan Hus (1372/73-1414), the most important religious reformer who anticipated the Lutheran Reformation. He was ordained in 1402, and became the rector of the University of

Prague. He was excommunicated by the Archbishop of Prague because he acknowledged the election of Alexander V, and his Archbishop supported Gregory XII. But when John XXIII issued his crusading order against the King of Naples, Jan Huss denounced the idea, as well as the accompanying sale of indulgences. He thus alienated King Wenceslas as well (his former ally against the Archbishop), who stood to be considerably enriched by the revenues. Huss was summoned to the Constance Council by the Holy Roman Emperor, who gave him safe conduct though he was charged with heresy, but within a month of him arriving he was imprisoned in a Dominican monastry and tried. The final 30 articles of his supposed heresies - none of which correctly stated Hus's teachings - were read to him. When Hus still refused to recant on the ground that such teachings had been falsely ascribed to him, he was declared Wycliffite heretic, deposed from priesthood and ignominiously divested of his priestly garments and functions with appropriate ritualistic anathemas, and his soul was consigned to the devil. He himself committed his soul to God. Thereupon, Hus was turned over to the secular arm for execution and on the same day was burned at the stake on the outskirts of the city. He prayed loudly until the flames choked him. [13]

There is every likelihood that Gian Francesco Gonzaga was at Lake

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13 Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol.9., P.65.

Constance Council, looking after his own and Mantua's (and John XXIII's) interests, and he was probably present at Hus's execution.

Rembrandt's drawing of him in *The Three Crosses* could be a deliberate invocation of Roman Catholic and Roman civil history. He was involved in standing by at a gross miscarriage of justice and subsequent martyrdom, as was the Roman Centurion. Remote, "detached as a symbol of loneliness" (of command, higher knowledge, and perception of historical pattern), resigned to the poignancy of his unpleasant duty, but nevertheless with the insight and knowledge to understand. Here was a man who was a dutiful soldier, a man interested in learning and humanism, as his subsequent history showed. But he must too have had the intelligence to notice that the trend of arrest, trial and execution was scandalously evil, "adding to the the mystery of a darkened world." He realised the power of vested interests, and social stability were more important than goodness, truth and beauty. Which is why he stood by and let Hus's safe conduct lapse, watched his betrayal, and let him burn. The forces at work in Gian Francesco Gonzaga must have been powerful and complex, and Rembrandt has drawn him so. Christ appears to be looking directly at him, though Gonzaga is looking down. His hand is raised in what could be a gesture of recognition, or

apology, or sorrow. "Once more he makes use of allusions and analogies which cannot be accounted for by coincidence, and which argue a deep understanding of the mechanism of the unconscious."

Gonzaga's hat, the growing tortoise, is entirely consistent with Renaissance dress when large, rich, fur hats were fashionable for the wealthy. It is out of context and grotesque for 33 A.D., and so shocking.

The "Great Symbol of Classical energy, horsetamer of the Quirinal" looks a little static in Rembrandt's etching. There are two of them, outside the Colonna Palace in the Piazza on the Quirinal Hill. They are also called Castor and Pollux, twins born to Leda who Zeus seduced in the guise of a swan. Legend has it that Pollux was the son of Zeus, but Castor was the son of Leda's mortal husband, Tyndareus. The twins (Dioscuri) were inseparable, but quarrelled, and Castor was killed, being mortal. Pollux refused immortality, in which Castor had no share and Zeus allowed them to stay together, half in the nether world, and half in heavenly world. Thus, if Kenneth Clark is right, and Rembrandt did indeed take as a model one of the Horsetamers of the Quirinal, it could be reference to the dual nature of Christ, human and divine. The idea of both being available to man is not new.

The more one looks at the two etchings called "The Three Crosses", the more one comes to the conclusion that in the Early State, Rembrandt was re-presenting the Crucifixion as we know it from the Bible. In the Late State etching, he has re-interpreted it with multiple levels and aspects. Ancient myth and history, paganism, early Christianity, the state of the Church, its power, corruption and mistakes, historical and contempory, Christian values of humanity and divinity, forgiveness, despair and triumph, and, of course, the human repetition of destroying the good, beautiful and true in the interests of power. Or money, but its more often the will to power which really drives men to the brink of neuroses.

BATHSHEBA: [See Item 19:]

After Saskia's death, Geertge Dircx was employed as Titus' nurse. She was a "little farm woman ... rather small of person but well made in appearance and plump of body." [14] She comforted Rembrandt as well, and he gave her some jewellery which was valuable and indicative of marriage intentions. A year or two later, Hendrickje Stoffels joined the household, a sergeant's daughter from Bredevoort. Rembrandt soon turned to her rather

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14 Houbraken, pupil of Rembrandt. C. White: P.126.

than Geertge, and she became his wife in all but name. Geertge left the house in 1649, sued Rembrandt for breach of marriage promise in the Chamber of Matrimonial Cases, and was awarded 200 guilders a year to be paid by Rembrandt. It appears that Hendrickje was Rembrandt's "representative" at the hearing, and that although he was summoned twice he failed to appear. This was not the end for Geertge, Rembrandt or Hendrickje. Rembrandt found Geertge troublesome for several years afterwards, and at his death she appears as one of his creditors.

In 1654 Hendrickje was summoned before the Council of the Reformed Churches, for openly living with Rembrandt in the Breestreet House. She failed to answer the summons the first three times. It would seem that by July of that year Rembrandt no longer belonged to the Reformed Church, since Hendrickje alone received an order to appear before the Consistory court.

At the fourth summons, Hendrickje appeared at the Court. She admitted that she had "stained herself by fornication with Rembrandt," for which she was punished, urged to repent and forbidden from taking communion. Three months later she had a daughter, which was immediately baptised Cornelia. [15] This argues that however "stained" Hendrickje was, she still paid her

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15 C. White: Rembrandt: P.129.

allegiance to the Reformed Church, and she undoubtedly stayed with Rembrandt. The Mennonites, or Anabaptists, baptised only adults on confession of the Faith. And Cornelia, despite her recalcitrant parents, was accepted by the Reformed Church. After the birth of Cornelia, Hendrickje continued to live as Rembrandt's wife, quite openly, but no more is said or heard from the Church about it.

But, in 1654, Rembrandt painted *Bathsheba*. The same year that Hendrickje was being summoned before the Council.

For a simple country girl, strongly educated in church matters but very little else, the summons must have been worrying in the extreme. She could not read or write, and signed documents with her mark. It was a time of grave practical decisions, of personal valuations, an individual carefully weighing fate, faith, desires, laws, love, charity, standing in the family and the community, illegitimacy, motherhood, renouncement, and, above all, what God meant for (and to) her and what was His will for her. With all this Hendrickje grapples, and the qualities she brings to bear on the problems are an instinctive intelligence, not educated intelligence, compassion, and a desire to do what is best for those she loves. She is obviously a woman of great inner beauty, gentleness and strength.

The Bible does not tell us very much directly about Bathsheba, except that she was the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and very beautiful. When David sent for her, she was obeying the King, who symbolized authority and demanded obedience from both herself and her husband, there was no question of her not obeying the summons. Uriah himself was an upright, loyal and orthodox man. Bathsheba and David must have found each other compatible to a profound degree. Bathsheba became pregnant, and from then on David went to considerable lengths to protect her and ultimately keep her for himself. First he tried to get Uriah to go to her on short leave, and when he refused the leave on grounds of religious and military protocol, David had him deserted in battle and so killed. "When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him; and when the period of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her into his house. She became his wife and bore him a son. But what David had done was wrong in the eyes of the Lord." 2 Samuel 11: 26-27. This son died when seven days old, but she went on to have four more of David's sons, one of whom was Solomon.

Here is another woman who must have pondered gravely upon what had happened. She had a good, faithful and brave husband, one

of David's trusted men. She could not refuse David's invitation, or summons, and had walked straight into a situation which rocked her to the foundations of her being. David must have been a powerfully attractive man, a leader, charismatic, a musician, with nothing effeminate about him at all - the list of his sons in 1 Chronicles 3 is staggering. Bearing this in mind, Bathsheba still betrayed her husband, and became pregnant. She was unable to stop inflicting the gravest cruelty on a good man. Subsequently she heard that Uriah had been killed.

Whether one looks at Rembrandt's *Bathsheba* with Hendrickje or Bathsheba in mind, it becomes a picture which draws one on to think about the forces in life which drive us, some of which we cannot take hold and shape. In the painting Hendrickje's body is beautiful, round, strong, with hands and feet that can work hard. Both Hendrickje and Bathsheba were with child, which explains the larger-than-usual roundness of the stomach. It could be why she is sitting up straight. It is very difficult to sit with a curved back in that condition. It is in no way idealised, there is not a shred of classicism about it. When we come to her head, she is gazing at the woman at her feet, but the presence only touches Bathsheba at the edge. She is oblivious of all but her thoughts. She is permeated with compassion, sorrow, the inevitability of destiny, acceptance, knowledge of right and

wrong and good and evil, motherhood and wedlock, we see her weighing and pondering her fate, knowing what the inevitable outcome will be, and facing the possible consequences of her actions. And her thoughts are indissolubly part of her body. But even if she contravenes the laws of God and the land, she will do so for sufficient reason, and not compromise her inner beauty or soul. Here is an archetype of gentle feminity, but even so, it is housed in a working, practical, less-than- perfect body. As ever, with Rembrandt, he is able to paint real, fallible human beings at moments when they are coping with forces much greater than themselves. And the more we look, the more we think, and the more we wonder at the subtlety of depiction.

ADAM AND EVE: [See Item 20;]

Having eulogised Rembrandt's *Bathsheba*, his other nudes come as a sharp surpirse. As Kenneth Clark points out, there must have been many comely and youthful people in Amsterdam to draw, but he chooses middle-aged and ugly women, meticulously detailed. They are all undoubtedly truthful and accurate portrayals. This was a direct contravention of prevailing modes. The human body was usually idealised and beautified. Adam and Eve always had ideal beauty of face and figure - this is the form of art called "classic", which derived from what the Ancient Greeks had laid down as perfect proportions. As mentioned earlier, the Virgin

was always drawn at an ideal age with her eyes and mind focussed on Heaven. Greek gods and goddesses too were drawn as the epitome of an athletic physicality, no blemishes at all, and personal identification deriving from the symbols they used. For an etching of a nude which has been given the attributes and symbols of Diana, the Goddess of the Hunt, Rembrandt must have chosen the most unattractive creature he could find. [Item 21] His male nudes are as thin and scabby as his female ones are fat and flaccid. His defiance of classicism is explicit, and the protest was not unnoticed.

The poet Andries Pels in his poem on the *Use and Misuse of the Theatre* describes these etchings in great detail and laments that Rembrandt should have misused his great gifts.

> Flabby breasts,
> Ill-shaped hands, nay the marks of the lacings
> Of the corsets on the stomach and of the garters on the legs,
> Must be visible if Nature was to get her due :
> That is HIS Nature, which would stand no rules,
> No principles of proportion in the human body.[16]

Rembrandt rejected classisism for Christian and humanist values.

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[16] K.Clark: The Nude - A Study in Ideal Art: P.327.

It appears in his all-too humanly realistic nudes, and in his etching of the *Good Samaritan*, where he has drawn a dog defecating centre stage, another incidence is the *Rape of Ganymede*, where he has painted Ganymede as a baby, squealing and peeing with fear as Apollo in the guise of the acroterion eagle hauls him off. It is as though his patience with moral hypocrisy has worn very thin, and he wants to shock the viewer into thinking straight. He always did view the varied sexual practices of classical antiquity with deep disapproval.

Rembrandt was not repelled by the blemished human race. Clark says that others, from antiquity onwards, who have been "defiantly truthful" by portraying less than ideal bodies, did so for laughing at, or to give a sense of superiority to the beholder. There is not a shred of pity or compassion in them. "To Rembrandt, the supreme interpreter of Biblical Christianity, ugliness, poverty and other misfortunes of our physical life were not absurd, but inevitable, perhaps he might have said 'Natural', and capable of receiving some radiance of the spirit because emptied of all pride." [17]

Rembrandt's etching of Adam and Eve is such a departure from the usual interpretations that again, it shocks us. The central

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17 K.Clark: The Nude - a Study in Ideal Art: p.327.

figure is Eve, and she has been drawn as part of the brute creation. She has no redeeming qualities about her whatsoever. She holds the apple to herself and is loath to give it to Adam. Adam has just arrived, is slightly less brutish, but his attention is focussed on taking the apple from Eve, like a jackdaw after a shiny object. Rembrandt makes it quite clear that in his interpretation of the story Adam is not given the fruit by Eve, but takes something he desires of his own free will. Up the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil crawls a scaly dragon, often used to symbolize the devil in place of a snake, with his head hanging upside down over Eve, with another fruit in his mouth. He is trying to look seductive. In the background the beasts of the field are represented by an elephant, probably chosen because of his serpentine trunk. It would be nice to think that the elephant is standing in front of the Tree of Life, but it is too ordinary a tree to be sure.

It is possible that Rembrandt was thinking of people in their original creation, before knowledge of good and evil. Which argues we were on a level with the beasts of the field, functioning on a mechanical level of gathering, eating and sleeping, and prone to accident. He perhaps thought of the majority of people still being in a state of original sin. If he was a Mennonite, he would have thought that baptism and the

forgiveness of original sin could only happen when a person was old enough to understand the concepts of sin, salvation and baptism, and Christian love. Furthermore the Bible says that Eve saw "that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate;..." The desire for wisdom was third. Rembrandt makes it clear that good food is the primary concern of his Adam and Eve, not wisdom or knowledge. Knowledge of good and evil is almost an accidental by-product, and the long and painful journey towards knowledge was started through a mild combination of greed, thoughtlessness and disobedience. Rembrandt never allowed himself to be deflected from his personal truth by the beautiful falsehoods of classical imagery. We must bear in mind the immense seriousness and feeling of personal responsibility with which Rembrandt contemplated the moral and spiritual condition of man. To him the formalised gestures and symbols which make up so much of religious art were evasions of that responsibility.

For example, Titian, the Venetian painter, was strongly supported by Catholic dogma, and Michaelangelo was strongly supported by Catholic dogma, Botticelli by Neo-Platonism. None of them questioned the respective interpretations, even when the evidence did not fit into the paradigms. Rembrandt did question, and he

sought his answers to his personally experienced queries from the Bible, as did Bach, later on. In fact, he went back to the source material, religious and historical, and ignored comparisons and commentary.

We must be aware of his relevance. Rembrandt undoubtedly saw real life situations echoing Bible stories. He found more parallels in the Old Testament examples than the New, relating the Biblical myth strongly to the common man, but he did not approach scripture from the theological viewpoint. For him the Bible explained everyday happenings, and his art could demonstrate the validity and pertinence of its portrayals.

His last works included a portrait of Jan Six, the Return of the Prodigal Son, The Jewish Bride, The Syndicks of the Drapers' Guild. In these pictures, faces have become reflections of the soul, not only likenesses and expressions.

Says H. van de Waal: - Chateaubriand said of Rembrandt's painting: "Wandering through the imperishable leaves of the Holy Book in which neither time nor measure exist, one is struck only by the noise of something falling from eternity."

Rembrandt's art is universal because it is true. He may dress

his subjects up in sumptuous garments, paint them into history paintings, faithfully portray the inward as well as the outward picture in his portraits, but they are always real people who are dealing with real life and real life happenings. As with so many of the Bible stories, they are as old as the hills and yet as up-to-date as tomorrow. It was, for Rembrandt, a practical document, or set of books, for practical living.

The Swiss theologian Karl Barth remarks, for example, that even Mozart's most radiant compositions in major keys, his serenades and divertimenti, are never entirely optimistic, while those in a minor keys are never entirely melancholic or pessimistic, and concludes with a comment that could apply equally well to Rembrandt's paintings: "There is no light which does not know in some way or other the dark; but also there is no terror, no anger, no lamentation that is not accompanied, close at hand or far off, by peace." [Cf. Karl Barth, Kirchliche Dogmatic III, 3, pp. 337 ff.]

REMBRANDT VAN RIJN

CONCLUSION

Rembrandt was at home in the *religious culture* of his time. He investigated it on his own terms regularly and fruitfully. Culture in Holland at this time was pretty secular - they were concentrating on their own economic and artistic renaissance. The more Rembrandt's "Biblical" work is examined, the more one notices that he eliminates any trace of Rome and the Romans, using typical contemporary Dutch scenes, with the exception of the two states of the *Three Crosses* etchings which were illustrated in the text, where there is a wealth of allusion and parallels available for comment. There are no drawings of priests or nuns. He enjoyed his Jewish friends enormously, he loved the antiquity of their race which showed in their faces. And there is no doubt he listened to the Jewish interpretations (and symbolism) of the Old Testament. One could say that he related well to the state-of-the-art conditions pertaining in Amsterdam -its freedom of press, its religious tolerance, its desire for wealth and culture, its myriad minority groups of different races. He was more attuned to Amsterdam than the religious instruction offered by either the Remonstrants or the

Counter-remonstrants.

Rembrandt felt fulfilled and *motivated* to pursue his own personal quest, his vocation. He enjoyed his life as much as possible. Kenneth Clark says that his happiest self-portrait dates from the time of the death of Saskia, his wife. He seems to have been popular - his students were fond of him, and he had many over the years. He was well-known round Amsterdam - his commissioned portraits suggest that he knew everyone who was anyone, and, of course, he and his sketch book must have been a very familiar sight. He was a true artist of the people.

Rembrandt rose above the nitty gritty of everyday life. He ran largely on intuition and compassion. He was highly intelligent, but he did not use his intelligence in the accepted academic sense, he used it for observing and interpreting the world around him. He was *"bigger"* than the religious culture of his time because he saw the world and humanity in larger terms than did the contemporary church, even though he never left Holland. The Bible told stories to illustrate ideal modes of behaviour (engagement), but Rembrandt could paint the implications of such stories, and the reasons why such modes of engagement worked. He could *conceptualize a sense of reality* which was meaningful to those who looked at his paintings. He took the contemporary

levels of symbolism into the universal. His commissioned portraits conveyed the minds and souls of his subjects, not just their features. [1.i.]

The more one studies Rembrandt, the more one gains the impression that he can stand aside from humdrum everyday life and let it go. "Lord what fools these mortals be" - but lovable mortals, tripping over their own feet, and he was very much one of them. He had no difficulty with a transcendent God, or his existence, but it would appear that for Rembrandt it was an impersonal God, rather like the watchmaker who set the watch running and has left the mechanism to run by itself. Rembrandt inhabited the fabulous and heartbreaking world of little people, who he endlessly drew and who responded, without education, to his drawings. This sort of life he trusted and believed in. It was worth listening to and he was proud to be a part of it.

Rembrandt was the greatest of painters. He was unique. The only others on a *comparable* level would be possibly Michelangelo, Monet, and talent-wise, Picasso. Monet is only comparable to him in terms of painting - he painted landscapes and nature and he did not venture into intellectual waters at all. "Monet is just an Eye, but what an Eye!" someone said of him, and Michelangelo or Picasso could not compare in compassion.[1.i.i.]

Rembrandt saw deeply into the reality round him. His *powers of expression* were such that he had no difficulty translating his vision onto paper or canvas. He could even draw the deeper significances of simple actions, which became imbued with great meaning, like madonnas, weddings and samaritans. He took the old material of the human condition and transformed it into symbols of integrity and revelation. [1.i.ii.]

Rembrandt's *self expression was more than adequate* to draw the nuts and bolts of life in human form. He never ceased observing it. He discerned patterns in human behaviour, illogical though they could be. For example, he undoubtedly saw the characters in Bible stories as ordinary, struggling, real people, with all the blemishes and courages of normal human beings. For him they were not idealized, mythologized, sanctified people, those sort had never existed. And he painted accordingly. His powers of expression were such that he could convey moments of deep significance, such as Bathsheba thinking through the consequences of her situation, Haman realizing his life is at an end, the shock at Belshassar's feast, the compassion and forgiveness of the father of the prodigal son, and the rejection of Judas- surely one of the most ultimate rejections of all time, by God and man. All these pictures become more and more intensely felt as they are viewed. More than any other painter, Rembrandt

draws you in to think and ponder on his visual representation. In a way he is painting time - one notices backwards and forwards from the moment depicted. He paints, among other things, the power of choice, and the realizations of the consequences of those choices. [1.i.iii.]

Religion:

Rembrandt did not stand back from *reality as a whole*, not at all. he *felt* that reality all too keenly. It was part of his gift, and most of his expression. His involvement, however, was the result of loving the heroism and courage of the struggle of those he saw about him. [1.ii.i.]

He enjoyed cosmic trust. He loved life, he enjoyed beautiful objects, and he loved people, some very much indeed. But he had no illusions about hardship, poverty, cruelty. He belonged to that just as much as to the love of art and beauty. It was part of the deal. But whatever was dealt, it was *well worthwhile* belonging to. He lived and loved and lost with maximum intensity, but with hope, compassion and dignity, never with bitterness or fear. He had very few illusions about reality. [1.ii.ii.]

Rembrandt had a *sense of providence* in that he trusted that

everything would come out all right. Except in 1649, when he was sued by Geertge Dircx for breach of promise, and he produced no work during that time. He does not appear to feel that he had an overt part to play for the sake of others. He must have known how highly gifted he was, but he had no sense of mission, in the way of finding an answer and insisting that people use his solution. His quest for religious understanding lasted the whole of his life, and he concentrated on painting the answers he found, so they were there for those with eyes to see.

[1.ii.iii.]

Rembrandt did not espouse any particular *religious tradition.* His investigations into the protestant variations of religion in Holland at the time must have contributed to his knowledge of human nature. He was, too, interested in Judaism. But not to the extent of becoming actively involved religiously. [1.ii.iv.]

He grew up in a pious, protestant, middle-class home. He appears to have distrusted Roman Catholicism and Classicism, as all the Dutch did. Holland prided itself on its tolerance and free-thinking, in spite of the *institutional* state religion being divided and fiercely contested. Most persecuted religious groups were given asylum in Holland. Rembrandt was not summoned to appear before the church court when Hendrickje was accused of

adultery, which argues that he did not belong to the *institutional* church. There is no religious criticism known against Rembrandt. [1.ii.v.]

Shaping Experience or Context.

Rembrandt had a vocation. He wanted to do nothing but paint from an early age, and he was quite definite about his profession. Painting was everything to him - his joy, his means of expression of all aspects of himself, his money-spinner. He expressed everything in paint. He appeared intensely curious about himself, what was it that was inhabiting this body with a face with a bulbous nose confronting him? [2.i.i.]

Identity:

Rembrandt's *identity* manifested as genial, compassionate, open, spontaneous. He had great love for animals - his dogs have personalities and the skinny horse of the Polish Rider expresses aspiration. His love included the human race - unlike Leonardo who thought it vastly over-rated in its own eyes. Rembrandt is objective about it, there is no sentimentality - he was earthy, practical and homely. So it was the heroism of the ordinary which directed the subject-matter of his art. [2.ii.i.]

It is thought that Rembrandt sympathized with the Mennonites, a

variation on the Anabaptist *perspective.* He was not "registered" with any church or "new religious movement." There is no doubt, however, that he sympathized and responded to those people who soldiered on in socially disadvantaged conditions with attendant burdens, and it is more than possible that his money went to some of those ordinary people as well as into beautiful objects. [2.ii.ii.]

Rembrandt did not have a very strong *corporate sense.* He never attended University, he went out on his own as soon as he could. He did not belong to any formal church. He had very little indeed to do with politics or government. He belonged to no painters' guilds or societies. None of the case studies set out to be individual, in the sense that they wished to stand out from the crowd. They acted as they felt was right, even if it was contrary to conventional behaviour. [2.ii.iii.]

Rembrandt stayed within the Protestant ethic. He accepted human behaviour as real, in all its variations and motivations. He was fascinated by concepts like compassion, forgiveness, betrayal, rejection, right love between a man and woman, father and son, mother and child. He expressed these concepts universally, so that the majority of people could "read" them, humble or educated. And the most readily understood portrayals

of these concepts were in the Bible or national history. So he took these stories, and illustrated them with people he saw in operation every day - councillors, traders, tramps and beggars, war veterans, housewives, maids, children, spoilt babies. His paintings are sublime in that he can infuse his characters with almost limitless emotion, and make their actions extraordinarily explicit. Joseph, for example, is always a roughly dressed, kindly looking peasant, often barefoot, faithful but not intelligent. But in Rembrandt's language, he was a small town (Dutch) carpenter. [3.]

Rembrandt had a *cosmic trust* in life. "The whole" was *trustworthy*, and he *belonged* to it. [3.i.]

Rembrandt *conceptualized* his cosmic trust in *symbol* which was the opposite from normal interpretation. The ideals of perfect beauty, perfect proportions of the human figure, the golden mean, he found irrelevant. He drew Adam and Eve as pre-myth humans, i.e. before any knowledge or thought had occurred to them, like ugly and unintelligent children. Most interpretations of Adam and Eve presuppose idyllic existence, until eating of the forbidden fruit. Rembrandt made it clear that the state of humans before eating forbidden fruit was pitiable, dark, unknowing and prone to accident. He was sharply criticized

for his ugly nudes. But they are not cruel. Previously when ugliness was depicted, it was to laugh at. Rembrandt's ugliness contains no trace of derision. [3.ii.]

Rembrandt felt life very clearly, very strongly. Of the case studies, he was closest to the heroism and heartbreak of the rough and tumble of life. He had no illusions about life's drawbacks. He lost all the people he truly loved before he died himself, he fully realized the tragedy, but it did not break him. His last self portrait says this - it is tired, old, terribly sad, but he is still himself, soul intact, believing in fundamental compassion.

Rembrandt's painting life was one long expression of all reality, and his relationship with it. He painted everything he could see.

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CHAPTER FOUR

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

PARTS I, II, & III

CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Bach (1685 - 1750) had a very ordered, logical intellect, with a genius for musical expression. Passion and compassion show in his compositions, in which he binds the quantitive qualities over to the clearest of communications. He can be infinitely gay and joyous. He found the Bible and its teachings mysterious and deep enough to provide inspiration all his life, the last 27 years of which he spent in the same material position. The Gospels always yielded new thoughts, interpretations and dimensions to his study, and his inspiration stayed fresh, original and spontaneous, until he died.

Between the years of 1704 to 1744 it is estimated that he wrote 300 cantatas, of which approximately one third are lost. He wrote fugues, preludes, passions, motets, the Mass in B Minor, secular music, with no sign of flagging or jaded effort. "It declares, rather, the unplumbable resources of his genius; for no limits to his inventiveness appear."[1] Bach used to head his scores "J.J.", for "Jesu Juva". When they were complete, he

[1] Terry: P. 62.

ended them "S.D.G.", "Soli Deo Gloria". Both Haydn and Mozart also asked divine assistance when composing, and it would seem that original creativity is better when the composer is in the equivalent of a state of prayer. Music, and its composition, was an act of worship for Bach - his religion dictated to his art, and his art was his expression of his religion and his response to life. At the supreme level at which Bach composed music, the elements of praise, worship God, art, expression are unified, integrated, universal. It is not motivated from the temporal plane and has no concern with worldly success.

Albert Schweitzer wrote a brilliant book about J.S. Bach. He was immensely well-informed about all aspects of Bach's work and methods, and I have necessarily leaned heavily on his interpretations and ideas. In the first chapter of the first volume, Schweitzer goes into the roots of Bach's art, that is where Bach came from, in the modern sense of his historical and environmental learning curve. Schweitzer sees him growing strongly out of the Middle Ages. "The grandest creations of the Chorale from the twelth to the eighteenth century adorn his cantatas and Passion. Handel and the others make no use of the superb treasures of chorale-melody. They want to be free of the past. Bach feels otherwise; he makes the chorale the foundation

of his work."[2] Schweitzer sees Bach's work as the perfect culmination of mediaeval (and German) art. The cantata evolved out of the mediaeval polyphonic chant, influenced by Italian and French instrumental music. Bach created cantatas that have endured, but they dropped out of fashion and church services very quickly after his death. As the world speeded up, they were probably found too long and involved. At the end of the seventeenth century, the musical Passion-dramas were in demand by the churches. "Bach puts an end to it (the controversy of whether this was permissible) by writing two Passions which, on their poetical and formal sides, derive wholly from the typical works of that time, but are transfigured and made immortal by the spirit that breathes through them."[3]

Thus Schweitzer sees Bach as a terminal point - Nothing comes from him; everything merely leads up to him. He goes on to say that Bach "was not an individual, but a collective soul. ....To anyone who has gone through the history of this epoch and knows what the end of it was, it is the history of that culminating spirit, as it was before it objectivated itself in a single personality."[4] This statement is questionable - Bach did not

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[2] A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.1., P.2.

[3] A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol. 1., P.3.

[4] A.Schweitzer: J.S. BAch, Vol.1., P.4.

rise in a vacuum, neither did he leave one, in the shape of a neat full stop at the end of an era of music, when he died. On the contrary, he left us a legacy of much perfectly formed and executed music, which no one to date (except possibly Mozart) has matched for clarity, logic, economy, variation, order, harmony and beauty. Furthermore, Bach related to the world on an individual AND a collective, or universal level. This "collective" quality of thought can be thought of as mediaeval- the concept of personal identity came gradually to Europe during the Renaissance in Italy in the fifteenth century. Equally, he demonstrated a deep understanding of different individuals in his musical protrayals. However, Bach's music, way of life and mode of engagement would appear to be similar in many areas to the mediaeval traditions.

Johann Sebastian Bach was born at Eisenach, Germany, in 1685, the son of a violinist, descendent of a line of musicians extending back over two hundred years. He was orphaned at ten, and went to live with his eldest brother, Johann Christoph. He became a choirboy at the Michaelskirche, Luneburg, when he was 15. In 1703, he was appointed organist at the Neukirche, Arnstadt, where he remained for four years. His youth at this appointment surely points to his instrumental ability. He then moved to a similar post at Muhlhausen and about the same time married his cousin,

Maria Barbara Bach. They had seven children, four of which survived. A year later he became court organist (Kapellmeister) at Weimar, staying there until 1717, when he went into the service of Prince Leopold of Cothen as musical director. There in 1721 he completed his Brandenburg Concertos. His first wife died in 1720, and at the end of the following year he married Anna Magdalena Wilken. She had thirteen children, of which seven survived. In 1723 he was appointed musical director for the city of Leipzig, where he had to supply music and performers for four churches. In May 1747 he played before Frederick II the Great of Prussia at Potsdam. Two years later his eyesight began to fail and he became blind shortly before his death in 1750.

It is notable that Bach stayed the whole of his life within a very small area of Germany. He did not travel further afield than Potsdam, Dresden or Hamburg, unlike Handel who was very cosmopolitan. In later life, Bach was the epitome of middle-class german solidity. But as a young man, he was capable of independent, intransigent, and downright rebellious behaviour. When he was at the Neukirche, in Arnstadt, he was well paid. He was expected to work at stated hours on Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays. Otherwise his time was his own. In October 1705, when he was round 20 years old, he applied for one months' leave in order to go to Lubeck to hear Buxtehude, the renowned

organist. He left an "efficient deputy" to fill in for him. He stayed away three months, returning in February, 1706. The Consistory demanded an "explanation of his absence, and took the opportunity to remonstrate with him on other matters. They charged him "with having been hitherto in the habit of making surprising variations in the Chorals, and intermixing divers strange sounds, so that thereby the congregation were confounded." They charged him with playing too long preludes, and after this was notified to him, of making them too short. They reproached him "with having gone to a wineshop last Sunday during a Sermon," and cautioned him that, "for the future he must behave quite differently and much better than he has done hitherto".[5]

He was, furthermore, on bad terms with the choir at Arnstadt, for which he was also reproached. Bach, says Schweitzer, was no pedagogue; he could not even maintain discipline. If things did not go as he wanted, he flew into a temper, - thereby only making the matter worse, lost heart, and let things go as they chose. Bach called one of the choir scholars, Geyersbach, an "injurious epithet", and Geyersbach had set upon him with a stick in the street. Bach had drawn his sword, luckily other scholars had separated them. Wind of the affair got to the Consistory, and it was proved that Bach had indeed used the offensive epithet in

[5] Forkel: J.S. Bach: P. 14: Footnote by C.S.Terry.

question.[6]

He then got into trouble for "making music" with a "stranger maiden" in the church. This was probably Maria Barbara Bach, who became his first wife a year later, but at the time no women were allowed into the churches, not even in Hamburg. Much later on, at Leipzig, Bach did have one or two women singers for solos, by which time the ban was breaking down.

At Muhlhausen, he was the organist of St. Blasius Church. He did not stay long at this post. He resigned a year later, saying that he had been offered the post of Court Organist and Chamber musician to Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Weimar, the salary he was earning was not enough, and that "though he had succeeded in improving the organ and the conditions of music generally, he saw not the slightest appearance that things will be altered for the better." Muhlhausen, in fact, was a stronghold of Pietism and unsympathetic to Bach's musical ideals.[7]

His next post was at Weimar. He seems to have been happy there, his salary rose regularly, and after two years he advanced to Concert Master. When the resident Kapellmeister died, the Duke

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[6] Schweitzer: J.S. Bach: Vol.I. p. 102.

[7]. Forkel: J.S. Bach. P.15. Footnote by C.S.Terry.

tried to get Telemann, who was in Frankfurt, and failing that appointed the Kapellmeister's son, inexplicably passing over Bach. Bach was very angry indeed, and instantly lined up his next post as Kapellmeister to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cothen. "In his haste to leave," says Schweitzer, "he seems to have demanded his immediate release in a rather peremptory way."[8] The Duke was extremely offended, had Bach arrested and kept him under arrest for a month, from 2nd November to 2nd December 1717. Bach finally got to Cothen in time for Christmas.

He spent six years at Cothen, where he was very happy. But in 1720 Maria Barbara died, while he was away with the Prince. She was buried before he got back. Four of the seven of their children were living. Eighteen months later, he met and married Anna Magdelena. When he left Cothen for Leipzig in June, 1722, it was largely because of the education of his sons. Bach wrote to his friend Erdman: "At first it was not altogether agreeable to me to change the position of Kapellmeister for that of cantor. Consequently I delayed my resolution for a quarter of a year; nevertheless this post was so favourably described to me that finally, especially as my sons appeared to be inclined to study, I ventured upon it in the name of the Most High and went to Leipzig, passed my trial, and at once set about the removal."

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[8] Schweitzer: J.S. Bach. Vol.I, p. 106.

The Germany of Bach's time was strongly Lutheran - in 1580 the Concordia Formula had been drawn up by theologians at the instance of the Electoral Prince of Saxony. It was intended to heal the schisms which had broken out after Luther's death, and to protect the Lutheran established churches of Germany. It condemned Calvinism, Melancthon's mild variation of Luther on a theme, and later Pietism and the Enlightenment philosophies. Bach lived and wrote in the post-Lutheran German principalities, when the role of music in worship was much greater than it is today. In his time (and area) the German Lutheran Church was pretty stable. The true significance of Luther and his Reformation "cannot be fully appreciated merely on the basis of works of dogmatics. Its documents are the writings of Luther, the church chorale, the sacred music of Bach and Handel, and the structure of community life in the church," said Wilhelm Dithey.[9] Bach's life was indeed structured heavily and happily within the church's orthodox framework, his own work and community life.

Martin Luther was quite definite that God himself incarnated as Jesus Christ, and convinced of the importance of the Holy Spirit's sancitification at Pentecost. He evidently enjoyed

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[9] Wilhelm Dilthey, *Weltanshauung und analyse des Menschen seit Renaissance und Reformation*, [Stuttgart, 1964], p. 515.

music, he wrote hymns and even composed some of the tunes to go with them. He "edited" the church services by "eliminating the accretions" which had crept in from the Roman Catholic church, but it is clear that he required a great deal of music during the services. What became the Lutheran Church inherited the music from the medieval church, in which the Gregorian chant dominated. Which in turn demanded choirs well trained in choral singing. The German chorale thus grew from polyphonic chants of the later Middle Ages, both Catholic and Hussite hymns making a substantial contribution. The result, paradoxically, became the introduction into Protestant worship of "concert-like performances by professional musicians," which made "individual accomplishment the artistic determinant in the Protestant church. "... Recognition of human excellence in its highest form, knowledge of the path that leads to it, the necessary done with dutifulness and driven to that point of perfection where it outgrows all necessity - this knowledge is the most precious inheritance given us with Bach's music."[10] So Bach, like Dante, can be said to be pivotal in the emergence of individual identity in Renaissance Germany. What Bach did to exploit these changes represents his heritage to us.[11]

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[10] Paul Hindemith, *Johann Sebastian Bach: Heritage and Obligation*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), 28-29.

[11] Pelikan: Bach Among the Theologians: P. 28.

After the end of the Thirty Years' War in 1648 Europe was devastated. Robbery, brutality, dissipation, poverty, witchcraft were rife. At this time the German Empire consisted of about 300 sovereign parts, most or all of which lacked the consciousness of belonging to an imperial entity. In Germany this was improved dramatically by the Princes who centralized the administration, the army and taxation, and became the focal points of cultural life. Some were absolutist states (Brandenburg, Bavaria), some had constitutions (Wurtemberg, Mecklenburg), many were hereditary principalities or duchies (Hanover, Saxony). The Princes of Brandenburg-Prussia (the Hohenzollern family) gathered together a number of these estates politically, through taxation, insistent influence and with a certain amount of military activity, which eventually became the nation of Prussia. Frederick William I, the Elector (died 1688), Frederick I, the "Baroque King" (died 1713), and Frederick II The Great were the three kings who ruled in Prussia during Johann Sebastian Bach's life. Austria's power was gaining rapidly, and Vienna became the political economic and cultural centre of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which engaged in wars with the Ottoman Empire until 1740. The Pragmatic Sanction endorsed Marie-Theresa's claim to the Austrian throne. In 1701 to 1714 the War of the Spanish Succession was fought because of

the uneven balance of power in Europe. Of these events, Bach seems unaware. None of them seem to have impinged on him at all.

The system of patronage and employment in many of the numerous German estates worked well. Rather like 15th Century Italy, each principality had its court, and the reigning princes indulged whatever tastes they had, for music, art, architecture, or armies. In the case of music, they would retain their own orchestras and composers on livable wages. Not only did the courts support musicians, but the towns with larger churches also employed orchestras, choirs, choirmasters and composers, for example Hamburg and Leipzig. Being a musician was a valid and respectable profession. As mentioned earlier, Bach worked in four of these kinds of establishments during his life, the longest period being spent at St. Thomas Church in Leipzig.

St. Thomas Church had a choir school attached, for the purpose of providing choral singing for four churches in the town. The School retained a certain number of scholarships for boys with good voices or who showed musical aptitude. All the pupils, paying or not, were given a basic education and were expected to sing in the choir, play instruments, and learn the rudiments of composition. Bach's contract with the Leipzig Council seemed to cover most contemporary contingencies:

1. That I will encourage the boys by a good example to live and comport themselves in a sober and modest manner. I will attend the schools diligently, and teach the boys conscientiously.

2. I will do my best to bring the music in both chief Churches of this town into good repute.

3. To show all proper respect and obedience to their Worships the Council, and do my best to protect and increase their honour and reputation in all places. Moreover, if a member of the Council desires to have the boys for a concert, to allow them to attend without hesitation; but beyond that never to allow them to go into the country for funerals or weddings without the knowledge and consent of the Burgomaster and of the Principals of the Schule.

4. To give due submission to all orders given by the Inspectors and Principals of the Schule in the name of the Worshipful Council.

5. To accept no boys in the Schule who are not already grounded in the elements of music or do not show sufficient aptitude to benefit by musical instruction; not to do so without the knowledge and agreement of the Principals and INspectors.

6. In order to save the Churches from needless expense, to instruct the boys diligently in singing as well as in instrumental music.

7. In order to preserve order in the Churches to arrange the music in such a way that it is not too lengthy, and, moreover, take care that it is not operatic in character, but may rather encourage a devotional attitude in the hearers.

8. Supply the New Church with good scholars.

9. To be kindly and circumspect in my treatment of the boys, and in cases of disobedience to be moderate in my punishment, or else report to the proper quarter.

10. To teach in the Schule and perform any other duties of my position in a conscientious manner.

11. To arrange for a competent person to teach anything I am unable to undertake myself, without putting the Schule or the Council to any expense.

12. Not to leave the town without the Burgomaster's permission.

13. In the case of funeral processions to keep close to the boys, so far as is possible, in the usual manner.

14. To accept no office in the University without the agreement of the Council.

And I hereby contract and engage myself faithfully to perform all these duties, under pain of losing my position if I act against it, and in witness thereof I have signed this contract with my own hand and confirmed the same with my seal.

So Bach, as Cantor of St. Thomas School, Leipzig, was responsible

for supply and execution of all the music for New Church, St. Nicholas' Church and St. Thomas' Church, and two other smaller ones, as well as teaching the boys. It would appear that he found teaching music and singing fairly rewarding, but he was no disciplinarian, so when it came to Latin, he employed someone else to do it, and in accordance with his contract, he paid the Latin teacher. The advantages of his Cantorship was that St. Thomas Church was large and had first class acoustics, and an excellent Organ, fairly modern and maintained by Bach. There was an old small organ too, over the Choir, built in 1489. New Church had a first class organ, but the best one was in the University Church, and Bach would play this one for pleasure and his friends.

Forkel, Bach's earliest biographer, says that he was most distinguished as a player, composer and teacher. He was an indulgent and concerned father, a kindly and faithful husband, a good friend, and a loyal citizen. He took his civil and social duties seriously, and worked honestly and hard. He was always hospitable - "Any lover of art, stranger or fellow countryman could visit his house and be sure of meeting with a friendly reception. These sociable virtues, together with his great artistic fame, caused his house to be rarely free from

visitors."[12]

His opinion of other composers and their work was invariably fair and generous, even enthusiastic - he was not arrogant. He was aware of his mastery of the organ and clavichord, and he knew his work was good, but appears quite unconscious of his extraordinary genius. Schweitzer says that "In this respect he stands, perhaps, highest among all creative artists; his immense strength functioned without self-consciousness, like the forces of nature; and for this reason it is as cosmic and copious as these".[13] He won fame as a virtuoso performer, on the organ and the clavichord. "No one, not even his enemies, ventured to deny that he was the prince of clavichord players and the king of organists; but no one, even among his best friends, had a suspicion of the real greatness of the composer."[14]

Bach's own education was very good. The letter of dedication of the Brandenburg Concertos is very elegantly expressed in French, and he always used foreign words in their correct sense. The Concertos had been commissioned by the Margrave Christian Ludwig (1677-1734). Bach signed his name sometimes in German, sometimes

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[12] Forkel: P.45.

[13] A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol 1., P. 166.

[14] A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.1. P.178

in French and sometimes in Italian. He knew Latin well enough to teach in the school (though he disliked the task intensely and soon off-loaded it) and also used Latin in his Musical Offering to Frederick the Great. He was conversant with rhetoric as it was then taught, was an interesting conversationalist, and gave his sons a thorough and scholarly education, all of which denotes a highly intelligent and cultured man.

Schweitzer says that Bach's income cannot have been a poor one. "He brought up his large family honestly, gave his children a good education, was profuse and cordial in his hospitality, and at his death left not only a rich collection of first-rate musical instruments, but also a not insignificant sum of money. His household, when it came to be divided, was that of a well-to-do burgher. Anna Magdelena was certainly an excellent housewife. Bach himself was a good man of business and did not treat money matters as an unimportant part of life. One even has the impression that he frequently put them very decidedly in the foreground."15 He thoroughly deplored extravagance.
Unfortunately, Emmanuel & Friedemann (Bach's two oldest sons) separated the old mathematical and musical historical books out of his collection before dividing it up after his death, so it is impossible for us know about his interests other than music

15 A. Schweitzer, J.S.Bach, Vol.I, p.116.

music and religion. However, he did have a copy of Josephus's History of the Jews. Schweitzer says that his culture was not merely serious but religious. In the inventory of the property he left we find a large number of theological works, among them a complete edition of Luther's writings, Tauler's sermons, and Arnd's Wahres Cristentum. Polemical literature is well represented, and it enables us to see that Bach's views were strictly Lutheran.[15] In Cothen he would not permit his children to attend the reformed school, but had them taught in the newly founded Lutheran school.

Bach does not seem to have had many intimate friends. The people closest to him were his wife and his two eldest sons. He kept an open house, but kept anyone who wished for a closer relationship at a distance. Schweitzer says that for this reason we know nothing of Bach's real inner nature,[16] but I cannot agree with this statement. His inner nature was integrated, he was content, and he could make of himself a channel for his music of God, and as such he no longer had the need to burden or unburden a troubled soul. He knew, so to speak, about cosmic trust, and his soul was serene. There are similar complaints about Einstein, Smuts, Rembrandt, and Shakespeare. These men were

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[15] A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.1. P.168.

[16] A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I, P.186.

called upon to bear as much and more grief and pain than Bach, but they are neither rocked nor destroyed by it, neither did they need to spread it about. Schweitzer acknowledges that Bach "had been to the root of things."[17]

THE MIND OF BACH:

It appears that Bach's characteristic method of writing was to pursue a theme to its conclusion. He liked to exhaust as many possible manifestations and variations of an idea. Groups of related themes were often written at the same time. There are very few sketches or working sheets extant, and the finished copies of his work look as though they were written at high speed. "Everything points to the fact that Bach did not invent easily, but slowly and with difficulty," says Schweitzer.[18] It is possible that the slowness and diffculty came with the suitability of the theme to portray and enhance the texts, the times and the seasons. And, of course, the suitability for harmonic variations. Authors on Bach all stress the appropriateness of the themes to the texts, indeed that is how Schweitzer first began his monumental work on Bach - a French organist did not understand certain musical anomalies in his compositions, until Schweitzer explained the texts and

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[17] A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., P. 188.

[18] A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I. P. 211.

circumstances for which the music had been written. Pelikan too makes an excellent case for the matching of words to appropriate music in *Bach among the Theologians*. But once invented, he could vary and canonize and choralize it with great rapidity. As he did when improvising three and four part canons for Frederick the Great on a theme of Frederick's invention. "The working-out and elaboration of the themes may indeed not have cost him very much time, since it often happens with him that the whole piece, with all its developments, is already implicit in the theme, and evolves out of it with a certain aesthetic-mathematical necessity, quite irrespective of the formal element in the development of a chorale chorus, a fugue of a *da capa* aria."20

Bach thus worked like the mathematician, who sees the whole of a problem at once, and has only to realize it in definite values. His way of working, as Spitta says, was consequently quite different from that of Beethoven. The latter experimented with his thoughts. In each case the explanation must be sought in the nature of the music itself. With Beethoven the work is developed by means of "episodes" that are independent of the theme. These do not occur in Bach; with him everything that "happens" is an emanation from the theme.21

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20 A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., P. 211.

21 A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., P. 211.

In Bach's documents we see the same mathematical habit of mind that we find in his compositions. Whatever he wrote in a business sense, (letters, dedications, orders, etc.) words or music, was logical and clear, except when he wanted to express something emotional, for example when he wrote his own libretti. Then he becomes awkward, and he uses some Saxon dialect in verses. "We must remember, however, that this curious change almost invariably occurs whenever the mathematical mind branches out into the domain of imaginative thought, whether in poetry or philosophical speculation."[21] But however clumsy he was with emotion verbally, musically it is expressed powerfully and clearly.

Bach was an excellent teacher of all musical subjects. He wrote for his own family's learning and amusement. Bach wrote simple themes which could be extrapolated into all sorts of different parts, obviously so that the children (and pupils) were subtly taught the elements of composition. He commended fifteen pieces as "invaluable exercises for the fingers and hands, and sound models of taste." "But they are far removed from the dull literature of the schoolroom. For here, as in all his instructional music, Bach had and ulterior purpose, which his

[21] A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., P.212.

prefatory title reveals. His intention was to shape the pupil's artistic sense, and to stimulate his latent faculties as a composer, a motive that seems extravagant, till we remember that his students were embryo Cantors and organists, and that in his eyes music was the most worthy homage man could offer to his Maker."[22] The crown and glory of Bach's instructional music is *The Well Tempered Clavier*, which, in Spitta's opinion, "reflects the whole of the Cothem period of Bach's life, with its peace and contemplation, its deep and solemn self-collectedness."[23]

Old-style music was content with only a few keys, generally those which had no more than three sharps or flats in their signature. Theoretical correctness of intonation was most important. This gave the scales an "unequal temperament", which the more progresssive composers realized placed them under severe limitations. "Equal temperament" proposed to make all the semitones in the scale equal. Hence, each octave would be divided into twelve equal semitones; every scale,instead of only a few, would be approximately correct; and the bar to free modulation would be removed. The twelve-semitoned scale has become universal, and by practical demonstration Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier assisted to establish it.

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[22] Forkel: P.28.

[23] Forkel: P.30.

"Perhaps we can still better characterise Bach's mind as architectonic. The powerful aesthetic impression given by his works comes from the harmony of the whole structure, in which all the copious and animated details fit quite naturally. Bach's music is the perfected Gothic of the art. (mediaevalism again). The further he advances in his fugues, the simpler and grander become the lines."[24]

An anecdote that has survived shows that in practical archtitecture too Bach was gifted with unusual insight. "When he was in Berlin", says Forkel, "He was shown the new opera house. At first glance he detected everything that was excellent or faulty in the non-musical portions of the building, which others had discovered only by experience. He was taken into the great dining room; he went into the gallery that runs round it, looked at the ceiling and said, without more ado, that the architect had here accomplished, perhaps unconsciously, and without any one else being aware of it, a piece of jugglery. That is to say, when someone spoke quite softly against the wall in one corner of the gallery of the oblong room, anyone who stood above the arch in the other corner, with his face turned to the wall, could hear the words quite distinctly, though they were not audible to any

[24] A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., P. 213.

one else in the whole room, either in the middle or at any other spot. This effect came from the form and position of the arches fixed to the ceiling, the peculiar quality of which he detected at first glance."26

PURE RELIGION:

For documentation of Bach's orthodoxy, Bach's own copy of the three-volume annotated German Bible of the most stalwart of all the defenders of Lutheran Orthodoxy, Abraham Calovius (1612-86), with marginalia in Bach's hand, has been found. It came into his possession in 1733, and he kept it until he died, in 1750. Calovius' translation was to a positive exegis. It has interpolations and interpretations in the text. Bach obviously knew it well and used it often. Pelikan considers Bach's confessional orthodoxy under three topics - his belief in the absoluteness of Christianity; the doctrine of justification as the formal principle of the Reformation; and the authority of Scripture in opposition to the "pride" of human reason as the material principle of the Reformation. Bach was also a stout Trinitarian - Bach's copy of Calov's annotated Bible insisted that the Second Commandment of the Mosaic Decalogue in Ex. 20:3 meant "that we must accept, acknowledge, and honor only the Holy Trinity as God, and put our trust in him."27

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26 Forkel: J.S. Bach: pp. 20,21.

27 J.Pelikan: Bach among the Theologians, 1986: p.44.

Schweitzer says: "In the last resort, however, Bach's real religion was not orthodox Lutherism, but mysticism. In his innermost essence he belongs to the history of German mysticism. This robust man, who seems to be in the thick of life with his family and his work, and whose mouth seems to express something like comfortable joy in life, was inwardly dead to the world. His whole thought was transfigured by a wonderful, serene longing for death. Again and again, whenever the text affords the least pretext for it, he gives voice to this longing in his music; and no-where is his speech so moving as in the cantatas in which he discourses on the release from the body of this death. The Epiphany and certain bass cantatas are the revelation of his most intimate religious feelings. Sometimes it is a sorrowful and weary longing that the music expresses; at others, a glad, serene desire, finding voice in one of those lulling cradle-songs that only he could write; then again a passionate, ecstatic longing, that calls death to it jubilantly, and goes forth in rapture to meet it."[26]

This passage is a little surprising, that Schweitzer is convinced that Bach was panting for death. It reflects Schweitzer's own longing for union with God, which too had a very strong element

[26] A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., P.169.

of mysticism in it, as we know. It is possible that Schweitzer felt the human load very heavily indeed, and saw death as full union with God and the only way to shed that load. It is known that he was an extremely good and serious man, devout to the exlusion of all frivolity. This is a negative way of looking at a man's (Bach's) constant pursuit of knowledge of the ultimately real through his own subjective experience, but certainly does not invalidate the mysticism of either man. Schweitzer would seem to long for death with a certain amount of passion. Bach looked forward to it as a marvellous thing that would happen when it was time. Neither man disengaged with real life. They both worked endlessly and tirelessly with the human beings around them, though Bach stayed unspectacularly where he was and coped with horrid little schoolboys, recalcitrant prefects and officials. Schweitzer worked dramatically with romantic noble savages. Bach, however, could give as good as he got. When playing the organ during Sunday devotions, he would often become absorbed in the theme he was playing and forget his choir and congregation completely, who of course could not follow his instant inventiveness, and they were left floundering musically. In secular matters, few could match him for stubbornness and tenacity, and he would eventually get his own way.

Pelikan has this to add: "But this must not be taken to mean,...

Pelikan has this to add: "But this must not be taken to mean,... that even in the face of the rationalistic critique of the biblical message by the Aufklarung, his was a placid and unruffled faith. Repeatedly in his works, texts & music, we hear ..the words of the father of the demoniac child in the Gospel of Mark (9:24) who, we are told "cried out with tears and said, "I believe, help my unbelief!" Bach's Cantata (BWV 109) text:
"I have faith, O dear Lord, Help my unbelieving",
and (BWV 78) "Jesus thou who this my spirit", and the Mass in B minor closing chorale is a prayer for strength in just such weaknesses as unbelief and sin."29

For Bach, the highest activity of the human spirit was the praise of God. Such praise involved the total activity of the spirit. This rings true of all Bach's work. Bach believed that the Biblical text was designed to release within the reader an intense kind of spiritual activity. The interpreter, verbal or musical, must help engender in the listeners a reaction appropriate to the text at hand. He should give first priority to the events narrated (in the Gospel) which call the contemporary audience to recognize as relevant.30

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29 J. Pelikan: Bach among the Theologians: 1986: P.40.

30 Pelikan: Bach among the Theologians,1986: P.120,121.

The motive of Bach's theology was the specifically Christian. One student of Bach has summarized the contrast in this way: "I have yet to find in Bach's confessions, either by word or by the implications of his life or in the content of his music, any concern for religion save as that word meant to him the common faith of his people and church and time. The good city of the consummation toward which his soul pressed was not Parnassus but Jerusalem; the songs which drew from him the wonderfully sweet and devout arias of the cantatas were not the songs of Pan but the songs of Zion; the spirit whose might he evoked in his labors was not the Goethean spirit of the Cosmos but the Holy Ghost of his stout faith; the river at whose waters he 'sings the song of Zion in a strange land' is not the mythological Lethe but the historical Babylon." He believed in the fall of man. "All mankind fell in Adam's fall."31

Cantata 18, Bach's faith declared: "My soul's treasure is the Word of God." His whole life and work were a living testimony to his conviction that man could not live by bread or by beauty, but only by the Word that proceeded from the mouth of God. Beauty was demonic if it was not subordinated to the speaking of God.32

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31 J.Pelikan: Human Culture and the Holy:1955: P.151.

32 J. Pelikan: Human Culture & the Holy,1955: P.152.

For Bach, then, praise of the eternal and transcendent God was an expression of boundless freedom rising up from earth. But as God had limited himself in the Incarnation, so the praise was bound to form and limitations. This is unique to Bach, this binding to form. His music contained all harmonic logicality within the themes. Bach may have worked the other way round - he is able to think and ponder the eternal Christian God in cosmic terms, and express this in logical and harmonic form left pure and unaffected by the human condition - he may have started cosmic and then honed in to the small and precise.. "He did not wonder, then, whether the Thomaners could perform his works properly, or whether the congregation understood them. He had put heart, mind and soul - all his devotion into them, and God at any rate certainly understood them. The J.J. and the S.D.G. with which he started and ended his scores, were his Credo and necessary method."[31]

"The Figured Bass", Bach says in the rules and principles of accompaniment that he gave his pupils, "is the most perfect foundation of music. It is executed with both hands in such a manner that the left hand plays the notes that are written, while the right adds consonances and dissonances thereto, making an agreeable harmony for the glory of God and the justifiable

[31] A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., P. 166.

gratification of the soul. Like all music, the figured bass should have no other end and aim than the glory of God and the recreation of the soul; where this is not kept in mind there is no true music, but only an infernal clamour and ranting." These notes are preserved in a copy of Friedmann's Klavierbuchlein (Little Clavier Book), over his first piano pieces. It dates from 1738.[32] Then, musical education belonged to the sphere of religion; and Bach wrote "In Nomine Jesu" at the beginning of Freidmann's Book.

Schweitzer says that Bach was sharply opposed to Pietism, and he took Lutherism's part against it. But for all that, Bach's work exhibits strong traces of Pietist thought, which emphasises the personal in religious experience and relationship with God. It is inevitable that Bach would find that he must praise and thank God on a personal level, as well as the general cosmic level. Both forms of worship are valid. However, no one seems to have noticed at the time that Bach had these alarming tendencies, and this criticism has arisen with modern scholarship.

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[32] Spitta III, 317 ff.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

PART II

MUSICAL SOURCES:

Bach's sources seem to be everyone else's music. It appears he would take themes from all sorts of people and ..."he did not concern himself in the least to transcribe them as they were in the original, but treated them all alike with the utmost freedom, no matter who the composer might be. Where he thinks the basses inexpressive, he substitutes others for them; he adds new or interesting middle parts almost throughout; he even transforms the upper voice completely when it occurs to him to do so. Not even the plan and the development of the works are respected. Sometimes he goes his own way immediately after the first bars, then follows the original for a little while, again branches off, returns once more, omits something here, inserts something there, without troubling himself whether his transcription becomes only half or twice as long as the original. He does not learn from the original, but with his masterly corrections, rather sits in judgment on them - tho this was certainly not his intention.[1] Bach plagiarized happily, and excercised his enormous inventive power on borrowed themes - some of which were definitely mediocre. He liked other people's music in the most uncritical

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[1] A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.1., P.195.

way, simply because it stimulated his own creative activity. In certain cases it was an actual necessity to him.....it was as though he had to set the machinery of his invention going by artificial means. He...."cannot, they say, ravish people with his own combinations of tones until he has played something from a score to set his imagination in motion."[2] This was another of his modes of engagement, which probably started when a young man. Forkel relates that Bach took Vivaldi's Concertos for the Violin, and "conceived the happy idea of arranging them for the Clavier. Hence he was led to study their structure, the musical ideas on which they are built, the variety of their modulations, and other characteristics. Moreover, in adapting to the Clavier ideas and phrases originally written for the Violin Bach was compelled to put his brain to work, and so freed his inspiration from dependence on his fingers. Henceforth he was able to draw ideas out of his own storehouse, and having placed himself on the right road, needed only perseverance and hard work to succeed.[3] Terry mentions too that early in his career Bach was given to varying a given theme and of presenting it with diverse embroidery. His Goldberg Variations are the classic example of his genius in this form.[4] Once he had loosened up, his could compose themes of

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[2] A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.1., P.195.

[3] Forkel: P.71.

[4] C.S. Terry: The Music of Bach: P.20.

great originality himself.

In Leipzig, Bach composed naturally for and within the four seasons of the Liturgical year. The four major festivals were Christmas and Epiphany (including Advent), Easter (including Lent), Pentecost (including Ascension day), and Trinity Sunday (including the "ferial" or "non-festive" cycle of the Sundays after Trinity). The liturgical year prescribed the context of his compositional activity, the texts, the chorales, the high days had their place, history, symbolism and meaning. If it had not been for St Thomas Church needing regular cantatas relevant to the time and the season, very little would have needed to have been written.

It is, in fact, a very successful form of patronage. "Michelangelo and Bach created what they did because they were commissioned to do so by popes and church councils, or by noblemen and town councils," says Pelikan, who then opines that this makes the great figures contradict themselves as and when expedient, so as to fit in with orders.[5]

Except for the abolition of such festivals as Corpus Christi as well as some saints' days and Marian festivals, the Lutheran and

[5] J. Pelikan: Bach Among the Theologians, P. 3.

Anglican Reformations (by contrast with Calvinism and especially Puritanism) had left the fundamental outline of the church year intact, and in Bach's time the churches he served continued to observe it. The services were immensely long - from 7 a.m. till noon. It is thus no wonder Bach had a discipline problem-keeping choirboys cooped up for five hours on the stretch would be demanding.

The normal cantata for the Eucharist would be laid out as follows:

1. Chorale Chorus or chorus upon a short passage from the Bible;
2. Recitative of 12 or 20 lines in length;
3. an Aria-arioso or a fugued chorale;
4. Recitative
5. Aria
6. Chorale or fugue.

This would take at least half an hour to sing, usually longer. About thirty [cantatas] were in his portfolio when he went to Leipzig. So, between 1723 and 1744 he composed two hundred and sixty five, an average of one cantata each month, a calculation confirmed by the condition of his service at Weimar, which prescribed a similar monthly quota. In his list of works they fill nineteen volumes, "a monument of duty which only the inspiration of high purpose can have prevented from becoming

irksome".[6] They were sung after the vernacular gospel reading and before the sermon. The libretto of the cantata was based on the the Gospel text. It was as though Bach himself was in the pulpit, reinforcing and expounding the Gospel in the language of his own art, and to that exposition he brought a wealth of insight and thought to the task.

C.S. Terry says that nowhere else in his music do we so closely approach the mind of Bach as in his cantatas; "for they reveal the deeps of his character, the high purpose to which he dedicated his genius. Already as a schoolboy he was serious beyond his years, and throughout his life religion was his staff and comfort. With what vivid literalness he read his Bible is evident in the music with which he clothed its text. .....
Thus, the music of the cantatas is a faithful mirror in which the mind of their composer is revealed. They disclose the fact that his astonishing fecundity was controlled by searching and frequent pondering of the texts he set. They reveal the keenness and clarity with which he visualized Bible scenes and characters. How consistent and devotional, for instance, is his protrayal of the Saviour's gracious dignity! And, after hearing the several Michaelmas cantatas, who can doubt that Bach pictured Satan, not as Isaiah's Lucifer, the Day Star, the Son of the Morning, but as

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[6] C.S. Terry: The Music of Bach, P.64.

the malignant and cumbrous Serpent of Genesis, the Great Dragon of Revelation? For always Bach depicts his rolling gait in writing themes which outline his motion as clearly as an etcher's pen. With what tender touches he paints the scene of the Nativity! And with what poignant emotion he follows the Saviour's footsteps to Calvary! .....[the cantatas] reveal his personality no less than his art."[7] It is a comedy of contradiction that Bach is regarded as a cold mathematical precisian. He was deeply emotional, and it shows up extremely clearly in his musical language. Lack of understanding of his musical language has brought about the mathematical myth. In his cantatas this language can be studied over a wide field, and may be described as one of realistic symbolism, expressing particular moods and signifying particular actions by melodic or rythmic, figures. And the idioms never vary. "For Bach's language, developed to its fullest in the cantatas, is employed in almost the earliest of his compositions, ... It is, indeed the most consistent musical idiom known to us and also the most precise.....The root symbols are constant in his usage and dissipate at a breath the false notion of him as a cold formalist."[8]

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[7] C.S. Terry: The Music of Bach: P.64-66

[8] C.S. Terry: The Music of Bach, an Introduction. P.67.

THE PASSIONS:

The closer we study the St Matthew Passion the more evident it is the work of a mind intimately familiar with and profoundly moved by the Gospel text.[9] Bach believed that Christ triumphed over evil and death in dying for us - a full redemption. A contemporary of Bach's, Reimarus, had written an "Apologia for the Rational Worshippers of God", in which he reckoned that Jesus' mission failed because he was crucified, and the crowd did not recognise him and save him from execution. Pelikan sees the St. Matthew Passion as a reply to this, refuting the idea. This theory is problematical because Reimarus was outwardly a normal monk, and his secret (and extremely unorthodox) ideas and writings were not published until after his death. It is highly unlikely that Bach knew about Reimarus' theory.

The prologue of the St. John Passion is about the triumph of the Eternal over the mortal, a celebration of Christ the Victor. Jesus is God's only Son, who in spite of the affliction of the Passion reigns victorious. "Christ hangs on the Cross crucified but triumphant. Over a persisting pedal, which never ceases except at three significant intervals, the Violins give out a subject, tranquil yet positive, a cloud of majesty over the Lord of heaven:

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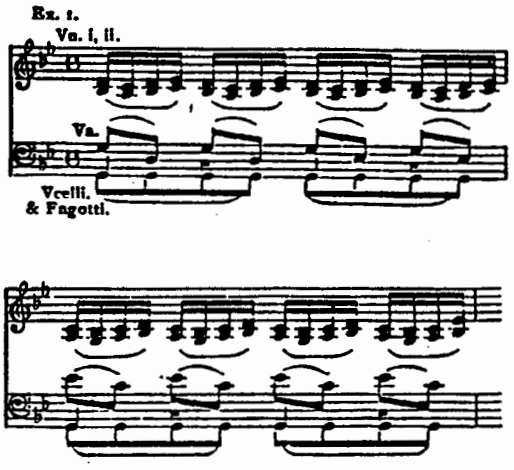
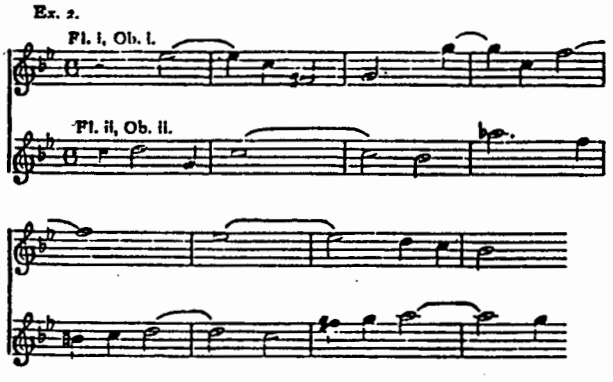
[9] C.S. Terry: The Music of Bach, an Introduction. P.79.



The Flutes and Oboes wail out a theme of woe on a higher tone:



[10]

The prologue of the St. Matthew Passion is completely different. It is a crowd scene. "In conception and composition the movement is one of the largest and most impressive pictures in Bach's gallery. In the foreground a band of Roman soliders; in their midst the Man of Sorrows staggering under the Cross's burden: a sad procession moving forward slowly: Zion and her

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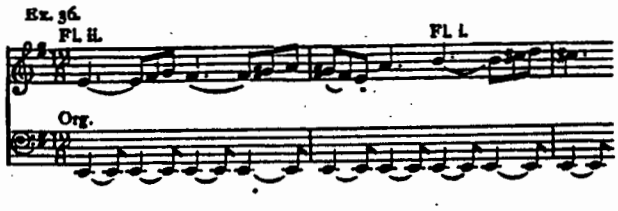
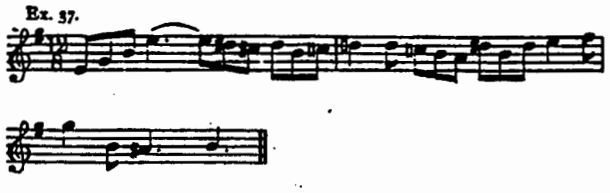
[10] C.S. Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: I.p.22.

daughters in the distance awaiting it expectant. For the first seventeen bars the two Orchestras (in unison until bar 14) unite in a march-like rhythm heard above a throbbing pedal point which typifies the weary Saviour:



Next, Zion adds her voice on a theme whose opening wail rises a full octave, in counterpoint with the marchlike theme of approach, a subject whose chromatic structure bespeaks the bitterest woe:



[11]

Schweitzer sees this musical phrase as the agitation of an excited mob. "Bach's musical sense ....He saw Jesus being led through the town to the cross; his eye caught sight of the crowd surging through the streets; he heard them calling to and answering each other. It was this vision that prompted him to cast the introduction to the Passion in the form of a great double chorus...".[12]

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[11] C.S. Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: II.p.16.

[12] A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol. II. P.211.

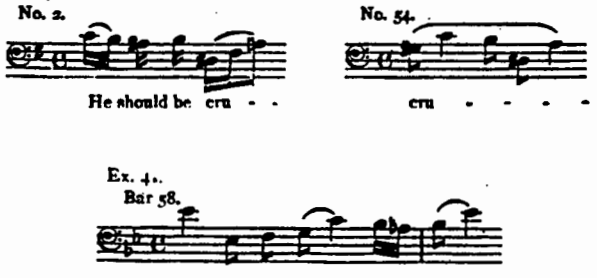
A music teacher who has studied Bach all her life has shown me how Bach has created this scene musically. It is true, you can hear the soldiers tramping, and the crowds moving excitedly about, curious, shouting, roaring - the flow to where its all happening, along with the staggering steps of Jesus. It is a very powerful evocation.

In the St. Matthew Passion, Zion, or the Daughters of Zion seem to perform a watching brief, supporting and explaining the Gospel. Possibly they could double for or symbolize the Jewish people, in "Roman bondage." They have their definite symbolism in the Passion.

In St. Matthew's text the voice of the Saviour is heard at once announcing the impending tragedy. This is absent in the St. John Passion. Accompanied by the instrumental nimbus that illuminates His every utterance save one, Jesus foretells His Crucifixion on a phrase whose structure anticipates the cry of His enemies:

Spitta, who was little inclined to exaggerate the pictorial

significance of Bach's musical themes, finds in this one the figure of a Cross whose horizontal arms are spanned by the outmost notes of the second illustration above [musical phrase] Clearly the notes B D A form an angle of acute poignance and express the agony of the Cross's victim. In the St. John Passion the thought of the Crucifixion summons a similarly curved phrase to Bach's mind:



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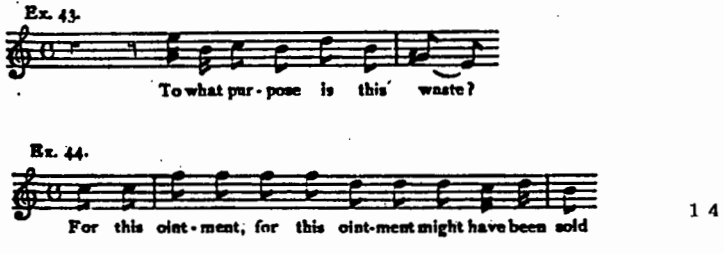
St. Matthew: When the woman anoints Jesus with the expensive ointment: The music for the disciples is acerbic and indignant at the waste of money:



14

Jesus' defence of the woman is sublimely tender. "Both the recit. and Aria are dominated by the *motif* of tears and grief of which their texts speak:

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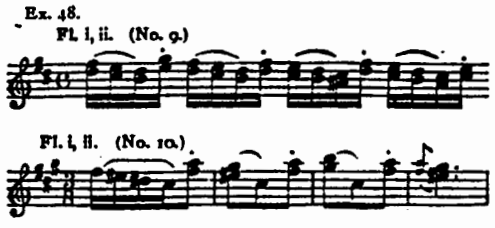
13 C.S.Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: II. p.19.

14 C.S. Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: Vol.II p.21



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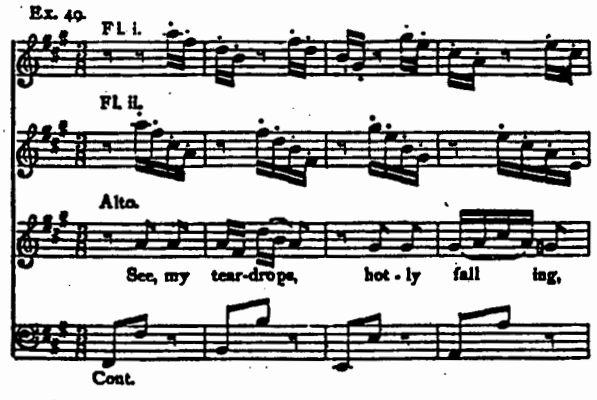
The phrasing is Bach's, forming a succession of emotional periods, each punctuated by a tear drop. The pictorial device is particularly graphic in the second part of the Aria:



Again, this is plainly audible to a listener, even one with very limited musical knowledge.

Then on to the Last Supper. The scene is "an atmosphere of serenity and expectant joy" until the Jesus refers to Judas' betrayal. Judas' music is harsh and strident. But it also pulses with tragedy, which makes perfect sense. They were gathered together as imtimates at a religious meal, and the

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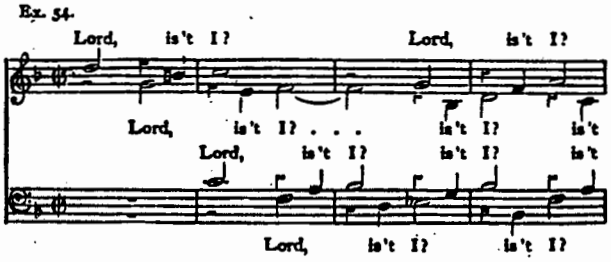
15 C.S.Terry: THe Musical Pilgrim: II. p.23.

disciples were not anticipating Jesus' dreadful end in any way. On the contrary. Bach shows this joy with a characteristic rhythm. "...until the Saviour's reference to the traitor Judas summons an abrupt chord of B flat minor."
Then the short phrase "Lord, Is't I?" is sung eleven times. Judas is missed out. Jesus is bombarded by the question, and as he can't answer all at once, they buzz between themselves.

Ex. 53.

Ex. 54.



16

Musically, the impact of this is dramatic and unforgettable. Again the evocation is very strong. I found when this protrayal in music was shown to me, Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper in Milan came strongly to mind. Leonardo chose to depict this moment of the Last Supper, instead of the more conventional one of Christ giving the Communion Sacraments. Bach's interpretation, so to speak, illuminated Leonardo's work, and vice versa. They are both works executed at an optimum level of art.

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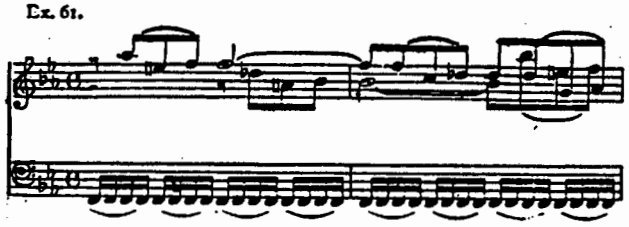
16 C.S.Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: II.p.27.

The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane is narrated by St. Matthew in seven verses. Bach puts it in three Recitatives, annotated by five reflective movements. The expansion deliberately emphasizes the tragic significance of the episode. ..The Saviour's "My soul is exceeding sorrowful" is accompanied by a "throbbing quaver rhythm which carries the menace of a storm."

Ex. 61.



[17]

The lamentations of the Daughter of Zion are echoed by the Faithful... Bach surrounds the melody with poignant harmonies, and it low setting brings it to the listener as a distant prayer.

In the St. John Passion, in the Garden of Gethsemane, Terry says: "The Evangelist's "Whom seek ye?" is answered in brief Choruses. In structure the two are one. But the second is pitched lower than the first: as though a sense of awe followed the first tumultuous intrusion on the Saviour, an interpretation supported by Bach's orchestral treatment of the two. He embroiders both with a significant theme:

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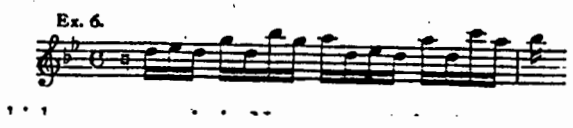
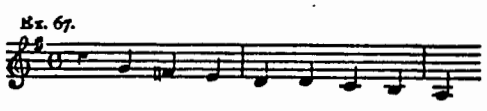
[17] C.S. Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: II. p.34.



which appears again [in the Passion]. His enemies seek the Saviour's life. Pitched high above the voices, it incites the mob with vicious darts of malice. In Chorus No. 3 it is particularly malevolent.[18]

The first part of St. Matthew Passion ends powerfully and dramatically. Jesus is a prisoner, and soon on his way to Calvary. At the words "They bear him hence", a descending theme is heard from the Strings in unison, which, march-like, bears the Saviour to Calvary:



"...The thunders roar, the lightning flickers viciously in the staccato of the Flutes and Oboes, and after the pause bar, the sudden explosion of the chord of F sharp major assails the betrayer from another quarter. Hell opens her jaws to engulf him whom the lightning has spared. The earth rocks in eruption, and

[18] C.S. Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: I.p.26.

nature calls for her prey. The movement is stupendous in its malignant vigour."[19] This was such a powerful piece of music that the original last Choral he wrote was too slight.

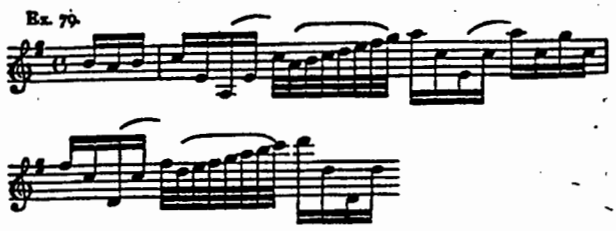
However, the opening Chorus of the ST. John Passion was big enough in "scale and grandeur, and its words sound a personal challenge to the hearer to find within himself the betrayer of his Master.[20] Thus Terry finds in the music what Bach wanted- that the interpreter, i.e. himself, should evoke a response of real worth in the listener, which was mentioned earlier. Terry says the whole movement is charged with emotion, and in craftsmanship is not excelled by any of the great Choral Fantasias in the Cantatas of Bach's maturest period.

In Matthew 27, 1-6, Judas repents and tries to return the thirty pieces of silver. This short scene introduces another of the concise dramatic Chrouses which distinguish the St. Matthew from the earlier Passion; Short choruses of less than 10 bars, they portray the bland formalism of official utterance. The priests and elders brush Judas off, which leaves Jesus still captive, and Judas unshriven. "The music seems ill-fitted to the words, with it bright tonality (G Major) and the striking curves whose widely

[19] C.S. Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: Vol.II. p.39

[20] C.S.Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: Vol.II.p.40.

dispersed notes picture Judas, with a sweeping gesture, flinging down the thirty pieces of silver."



[21]

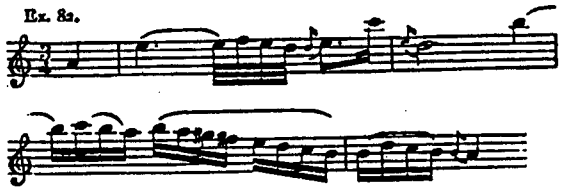
One can hear the rattle and tinkle of money flung down on a stone floor in anguish, bouncing across the flags. There is a painting by Rembrandt depicting the same moment - Judas returning the money. And Rembrandt's painting echoes Bach's rendition- anguished and pained in the extreme, with the silver rolling and scattered round the floor, Judas in agony and the elders slightly surprised, rejecting Judas' remorse completely.

Schweitzer comment on this scene is: "...Best proof of how bent Bach is on reproducing in his music whatever the eye sees and the ear hears. ....Bach however, has really derived it from his text. He fastens on the words (in the libretto) "Lo, the price for murder paid, now in guilty tribute laid". In accordance with

[21] C.S.Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: II. p.47.

this he first of all writes a rapidly ascending figure that suggests he throws away the money, and then the rolling and clinking of the silver on the stone floor of the temple." (Bach even represents the motion of an arm throwing - here and also when mentioning a sower.)[22]

Then comes the Trial before Pilate. Pilate's question "What evil hath he done?" afforded Picander (Librettist) an opening which he was unable to resist. A Soprano voice answers Pilate's question in a recitative whose sombre accompaniment and syncopated rhythm contrast the stricken Saviour with His good deeds of which the voice sings, and a following aria also extols Jesus' Love (Liebe). Terry says, rightly, that it seems to "hover in the air,...like a lark's song".



[23]

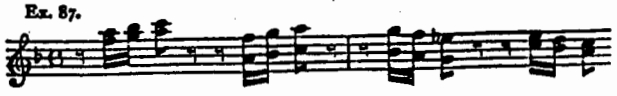
And then Jesus is crucified. The sound Bach writes for the falling scourge is almost unbearable, its so inexorable and full

[22] A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach. Vol.II. P.227

[23] C.S. Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: Vol.II. p.53.

of pain. The rhythm of it clearly portrays the fall and whiplash of the lash. And then Jesus stumbles and falls beside Simon of Cyrene who carries his Cross.

Ex. 87.



Ex. 88.

[24]

Bach sees the people hurling challenges to Jesus to save himself and come down from the cross, a mocking invitation. The choruses unite in venom. My teacher friend tells me that she was unable to sing on at this point, when as a student her college performed the St. Matthew Passion. The whole scene was so terrifying and so powerful that she seized up completely. And this was felt with no visual aids whatsoever - she was singing in a bare hall with a choir of fellow-students all dressed identically and soberly, standing still. This too goes for Bach's choirs singing in St. Thomas's Church - it is the superb combination of words and music which makes those listening or singing really FEEL the enormity of what happened.

And Jesus stumbles and staggers and falls on the way to Golgotha. Again, the music is so graphic as to be painful. Even when Simon of Cyrene carries the Cross.

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[24] C.S. Terry: Musical Pilgrim: Vol.II. p.57.

In the St. John's Passion too, Jesus stumbles in pain. Bach sees in the Saviour bound an invitation to intimate personal grief, and expressed this through the medium of the voice. Christ goes before Pilate, and is tried, and scourged.
This libretto is sung:

Take comfort!
Know, His body torn and bleeding
Will, hence proceeding,
Soon heavenward wing its flight
Take Heart!
O'er sins like waters surging
O'er billows of thine ill deeds' urging,
God's rainbows bright of grace is glowing
To show thee pardoned in His sight.[25]

Here Jesus died crucified triumphantly as part of a huge plan to save us all - God so loved the world, etc., and this ultimate ghastly death is in fulfillment of some overriding cosmic plan which was in place before he came. Bach believed absolutely that Christ died to save sinners.

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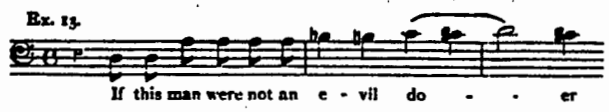
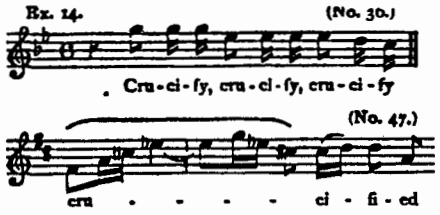
[25] C.S. Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: I. p.35.

The Saviour's trial before Pilate is rendered intensely vivid by the short dramatic Choruses in which, with extraordinary force, Bach expresses the malignity of the Jews. Pilate's question, 'What accusation bring ye?' unlooses their pent-up hatred on the snarling phrase:



[26]

and a new rhythm enters, vengeful in its hammer-like insistence, whose significance is fully revealed:



[27]

It is a vivid picture of the mob, fanatical, insistent, implacable. Pilate tries to save Jesus, Jews reject Christ and ask for Barabbas. Christ scourged, and again the rhythm portrays exactly the contact and whiplash of the whip - "but in the arching curves of the melodic lines we seem to see, as Schweitzer comments, the rainbow of forgiveness of which the stanza speaks."[28]

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[26] C.S.Terry: 'Musical Pilgrim: Vol. I. p.35.

[27] C.S.Terry: Musical Pilgrim: Vol.I. p.36.

[28] C.S. Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: I. p.37.

The German translation of "pavement", where Pilate takes Jesus, is "High pavement". With simple realism Bach approaches it by leaping a sixth and descends from it by jumping down a fifth. St. Matthew & St. Mark record the words, "Eli, Eli, Lama sabachthani?" as the last Jesus spoke, the outcry of His humanity. Bach therefore withdraws, for the only time, the halo which shines elsewhere upon His every utterance: the accompanying Strings are silent, the Organ takes their place. Soft sustained notes support His words, displacing the detached crotchet chords which accompany the other Bible Recitatives.[29]

And the death of Jesus turns tranquil, serene, and calm. In both the St. John and the St. Matthew the Jesus' body sinks into the grave on descending phrases closely similar. The music moves with the the rythm of a funeral march, but over it floats an atmosphere of serenest peace and calm.

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[29] C.S. Terry: The Musical Pilgrim: II. P.61.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

PART III

Pelikan, in his book, Bach among the Theologians, has this to say of Bach: "He may have been a convinced Lutheran who sought his salvation in writing music and persuading others to virtue. He may be considered the last of the medieval craftsmen in music, the product of a Germany which missed the Renaissance. All this is speculation. What is not is that he was a thoroughly professional musician, doing his job day in, day out."[1]

Bach was indeed one of the most dutiful and faithful men when it came to his work. But one can only speculate about someone like Bach - and he draws further away from understanding when forced into typecasts. For example, his religious convictions were not rigid, as the phrase "convinced Lutheran" implies. In his ponderings of the Bible and his musical interpretation of the texts he uses what he felt to be truth, and deeper truth, so inevitably he was subjective in some of his lyrics and librettos,

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[1] J. Pelikan: Bach among the Theologians: P.140.

and it is this subjectiveness which lays him open to a "pietist" criticism from the Lutheran quarter. Equally, it was this very subjectivity which enabled him to grasp the universality of Christ and the Christian teaching, in which, of course he is satisfyingly Lutheran. He actually arises above the disputable points between Lutheran Orthodoxy and Pietism, and uses what he feels to be true from them both. I am also quite sure that he had no missionary ideas whatsoever - he wished to have his gift from God - his compositions - performed as beautifully as possible, and whether anyone - himself or another - was brought to salvation or rendered more virtuous in the process was simply none of his business. But, it must be remembered, this thoroughly professional musician started and finished all his work with prayers, but prayers for good work, not for converts. And he was too practical and precise and ecnonomical to have done this if it had not worked, and served an essential and useful purpose.

BACH'S STANDING WITH OTHER MEN:

Schweitzer tells us that Brahms said: ..."for in old Bach there is always something astonishing and, what is the main thing, there is always something to be learned from him." And he used to read whatever he could of Old Bach's music as soon as it came to hand. Of Handel's work Brahms said: "It is certainly

interesting; as soon as I have time I will look through it."[2]

And of Mozart:

"Mozart knew Bach more by hearsay than from his works; at any rate he was quite ignorant of his motets, which had never been printed. Scarcely had the choir sung a few bars when he started up; a few bars more, and he called out: 'What is that?' And now his whole soul seemed to be in his ears. When the performance was over, he called out joyfully, 'That is indeed something from which we can learn!' He was told that his school, at which Sebastian Bach had been cantor, possessed a complete collection of his motets, and treasured them as sacred relics. 'That's right! that's fine!' he said. 'Let me see them.' As there were no scores of these works, he got them to bring the separate parts; and now it was a joy to the silent observers to see how eagerly Mozart distributed the parts around him, in both hands, on his knees, on the nearest chairs, and, forgetting everything else, did not rise until he had carefully read through everything that was there of Bach's. He begged and obtained a copy for himself, which he valued very highly." [Fur Freunde der Tonkunst, II, 212, 213 note. Rochlitz had already published this anecdote previously in the first volume of the Leipzig Musikalische

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[2] A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., P. 222.

Zeitung.] [This anecdote is also annotated in Forkel, page 58.] Hegel took the warmest interest in Bach, and took the opportunity to refer in his *Aesthetic* to the master "whose grand, truly Protestant, pithy yet learned genius we have only lately learned to value again properly." Hegel saw in Bach's music the genuine Raphael-like beauty, in that it had progressed from the "merely melodic to the characteristic", though "The melodic remains justified as the sustaining and uniting soul."3

For Shopenhauer, who attributed so great a significance to music, Bach did not exist; he did not fit in with the philosopher's definition of the nature of music. 4 !!

"Since Mendelssohn, every composer of any significance has been to school to Bach, not as a pedantic teacher, but to one who impels them to strive after the truest and clearest expression, and to achieve impressiveness not by the wealth of the means they employ but by the pregnancy of their themes."... "How Bach will influence modern orchestral composition cannot yet be seen; only this much is clear, that he will lead us back to a certain

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3 Hegel, *Aesthetik*, Part 3, Vol X of his collected works (1838). For Bach see p. 208. Schweitzer: p.244.

4 A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., P. 244.

simplicity, and will develop in a quite extraordinary way the sense of form of future generations." 5

This prediction has not come true - yet. It was written in 1908 by Schweitzer, but since then there has been the upheaval in the culture of the social masses, and we have tried to live within a limited framework. We are emerging from this "dark age" and form, logic, order, harmony on a wholistic level hopefully will return to our ideals of what is beautiful. In which case Bach will have more than enough to teach us.

Douglas Hofstadter compares Bach to Cage, one of our contemporary composers:

"On the other hand, to appreciate Bach requires far less cultural knowledge. This may seem like high irony, for Bach is so much more complex and organized, and Cage is so devoid of intellectuality. But there is a strange reversal here: intelligence loves patterns and balks at randomness. For most people, the randomness in Cage's music requires much explanation; and even after explanations, they may feel they are missing the message - whereas with much of Bach, words are superfluous. In that sense, Bach's music is more self-contained than Cage's

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5 A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., p. 261.

music. Still it is not clear how much of the human condition is presumed by Bach."6 - Or, let me add, how little is cognised by Cage. Bach wrote for God, not for the human race. Hofstadter goes on:

For instance, music has three major dimensions of structure (melody, harmony, rhythm), each of which can be further divided into small-scale, intermediate, and overall aspects. Now in each of these dimensions, there is a certain amount of complexity, tolerable complexity, which our minds can handle before boggling; clearly a composer takes this into account, mostly unconsciously when writing a piece.7 And Hofstadter goes on to demonstrate that you pre-suppose culture before you can understand. I still say that ANY alien culture would find Bach much more compatible (and comprehensible) than Cage. Our age has firmly tossed out the idea that the human mind boggles and rejects at certain points. One is made to feel like a mental retard if one insists one cannot cope with Cage's more absurd cacophonies or Picasso's more fragmented and dysjointed works. It is a classic illustration of Popper's irrefutability - if you don't like it you don't understand it and if you do like it the odds are you

6 D. Hofstadter: Godel, Escher & Bach: P.175.

7 D. Hofstadter: Godel, Escher & Bach: P. 175.

enjoy chaos, and you need no conversion!

MATHS & MUSIC

Music and maths have long held philosophical considerations. Augustine's De Musica, and after it the mathematically oriented De Institutione Musica of Boethius, would dominate musical education, and much of musical theory throughout the Middle Ages and into modern times. Thus we find Thomas Aquinas, in the very first question of his Summa Theologica, stating it as an axiom that "the science of perspective proceeds from principles extablished by geometry, and music from principles established by arithmetic," so that "the musician accepts on authority the principles taught him by the mathematician." At the same time, the Middle Ages had also learned from Augustine about "the delights of the ear... in those melodies which the words inspire when sung with a sweet and trained voice."

Recently, however scholars have begun to discuss as well the mathematical and numerological quality, not only in such avowedly virtuoso pieces as the Musical Offering for Frederick the Great but also in other works. It had been evident since studies early in this century that the 48 units of the Well-Tempered Clavier were based on an elaborately worked out and fundamentally mathematical conception of "symmetry of number and theme," on the basis of which the editor of Bach could correct existing copies.

The "cyclical" nature of Bach's Goldberg Variations (BWV 988), obvious at one level even to the untrained ear of the amateur listener, has been shown to be both highly complex and integral to the very structure of the work. But Bach's sacred music, too, is suffused with numerological structures. It is part of the logic and inevitability of harmonic law. It would be interesting for a skilled musician to look at this point the other way round - how can "symmetry of number and theme" as a mathematical conception be used to convey and explain abstracts like joy, happiness, pain, sorrow?

MUSIC LANGUAGE AND SYMBOLISM.

Forkel said that music, to Bach, was a language, and the composer a poet who, whatever the idiom he affects, must first of all have at his disposal the means of making himself intelligible to others.

"If the language of music is merely the utterance of a melodic line, a simple sequence of musical notes, it can justly be accused of poverty. The addition of a Bass puts it upon a harmonic foundation and clarifies it, but defines rather than gives it added richness. A melody so accompanied - even though all the notes are not those of the true Bass - or treated with simple embellishments in the upper parts, or with simple chords, used to be called 'homophoney.' But it is a very different

thing when two melodies are so interwoven that they converse together like two persons upon a footing of pleasant equality." ..... " New melodic combinations spring from their interweaving, out of which new forms of musical expression emerge ".... "Hence harmony becomes no longer a mere accompaniment of melody, but rather a potent agency for augmenting the richness and expressiveness of musical conversation." ... "Herein [in harmony] Bach excels all the composers in the world."8

C.S. Terry says, in *The Music of Bach - an Introduction*:

"Three things are necessary for the understanding and enjoyment of Bach's Organ Chorals - familiarity with the hymn-tunes he uses, knowledge of the text of the hymns to which they belong, and the key to his musical idiom & language..... [without knowledge of the symbolism] much of the significance of Bach's music will be lost, and the range of his thought missed. Briefly, his language is one of realistic symbolism, and the *Little Book for the Organ* is its pocket lexicon. He was not its originator; for the method was typically German. But it came to maturity with him, and in his usage of it he was consistent from earliest youth to mature old age. As his art developed, the master-symbols acquired manifold shadings and inflexions. But five or thirty in number. Some are directional, denoting ascent

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8 Forkel: J.S. Bach: P.72, 73 & 74.

or descent, height or depth, width, distance, and so forth. The act of hastening or running, and conversely, the idea of rest or fatigue, are indicated by appropriate symbolic formulas. The moods, again, are distinguished by themes diatonic or chromatic to express joy or sorrow. The thought of laughter, of tumult, of terror, and the forces of nature, the winds, waves, clouds, and thunder have their indicative symbols, which do not vary. Bach was one of the tenderest and most emotional of men, with the eye of a painter and the soul of a poet. But the fact is only fully revealed to those who are at the pains to translate them."9

LATIN COMPOSITIONS:

Pelikan says of Bach's music composed for the Creed:
"..we may turn for a moment to the duet for soprano and alto, 'Et in unum Dominum.' For as the two voices weave back and forth, they echo and re-echo the phrases of the Creed, 'Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero.' Even Albert Schweitzer, with his intense hostility to the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity and the person of Christ, finds the theology impressive." 10 And indeed, Schweitzer says:

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9 C.S.Terry: The Music of Bach, an Introduction: p.21:

10 J.Pelikan: Bach Among the Theologians 1986: P.46.

"The *Symbolum Nicaenum* is a hard nut for a composer to crack. If ever there was a text put together without any idea of its being set to music it is this, in which the Greek theologians have laid down their correct and dry formulas for the conception of the godhead of Christ. In no mass has the difficulty of writing music for the Credo been so completely overcome as in this of Bach's. He has taken the utmost possible advantage of any dramatic ideas in the text; when emotion can be read into it he does so.

.....

"The theologian Bach also had a hand in the composition of the Credo. He knew what the Greek fathers had in their minds when they took such pains to prove the identity of Christ with God and yet assert a diversity and independence of persons. To the dogmatist Bach the parallel passages... were not merely empty sounds to be turned into music; he knew what the forumulae meant, and translated them into terms of music. He makes both singers sing the same notes, but in such a way that it does not amount to the same thing; the voices follow each other in strict canonic imitation; the one proceeds out of the other just as Christ proceeds out of God. .... Bach thus proves that the dogma can be expressed much more clearly and satisfactorily in music

than in verbal formulae."11

ORIGIN & SEQUENCE OF EVENTS OF the MUSICAL OFFERING:

The Musical Offering was written under the following circumstances, described by Forkel, who gives the story as Bach's son Wilhelm Friedemann told it:

"One evening, (in 1747) just as he (Frederick the Great, at his palace in Potsdam) was getting his flute ready, and his musicians were assembled, an officer brought him a list of the strangers who had arrived. With his flute in his hand he ran over the list, but immediately turned to the assembled mucisians and said, with a kind of agitation, "Gentlemen, old Bach is come." The flute was now laid aside, and old Bach, who had alighted at his son's lodgings, was immediately summoned to the Palace. Wilhelm Friedemann, who accompanied his father, told me this story, and I must say that I still think with pleasure on the manner in which he related it. At that time it was the fashion to make rather profuse compliments. The first appearance of J.S. Bach before so great a King, who did not even give him time to change his travelling dress for a black cantor's gown, must necessarily be attended with many apologies. I will not here dwell on these apologies, but merely observe, that in Wilhem Friedemann's mouth

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11 A. Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.II. Ps.317 & 318.

they made a formal Dialogue between the King and the Apologist. But what is more important than this is that the King gave up his Concert for this evening, and invited Bach, then already called the Old Bach, to try his fortepianos, made by Silbermann, which stood in several rooms of the palace. [Forkel here inserts this footnote: "The pianofortes manufactured by Silbermann of Freyberg pleased the King so much that he resolved to buy them all up. He collected fifteen. I hear that they all now stand unfit for use in various corners of the Royal Palace."] The musicians went with him from room to room, and Bach was invited everywhere to try them and to play unpremeditated compositions. After he had gone for some time, he asked the king to give him a subject for a Fugue, in order to execute it immediately without any preparation. The King admired the learned manner in which his subject was thus executed extempore; and, probably to see how far such art could be carried, expressed a wish to hear a Fugue with six Obligato parts. But it is not every subject that is fit for such full harmony, Bach chose one himself, and immediately executed it to the astonishment of all present in the same magnificent and learned manner as he had done that of the King. His Magesty desired also to hear his performance on the organ. The next day therefore Bach was taken to all the organs in Potsdam, as he had before been to Silbermann's fortepianos. After his return to Leipzig, he composed the subject, which he

had received from the King, in three and six parts, added several artifical passages in strict canon to it, and had it engraved, under the title of "Musikalisches Opfer" [Musical offering], and dedicated it to the inventor."12

That Bach could extemporise two and three part canons is astonishing enough. [A Canon: a short theme or melody which is manipulated in many ways, always retaining its signature within the melody, and all the parts harmonising together. The original melody can be speeded up or slowed, staggered or rythmically changed, turned upside down or reversed, mirrored or inverted. Writing three part canons with these rules is difficult. Writing one with six parts proves that Bach's musical technical ability is astounding. He could also modulate into different keys, and after a certain number of stanzas could return it to the original key. Indeed he loved changing key so cleverly that the listener did not notice. But Bach was able to improvise instantly into 5 and even 6 parts. Douglas Hofstadter in his book Godel, Escher & Bach, an Eternal Braid, quite rightly makes a great deal of Bach's intellectual ability. Hofstadter researched the Musical Offerings further, and demonstrated that Bach could think up elegant puzzles, too.

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12 Forkel, Johann Sebastian Bach: Ps.24-26.

In the copy which Bach sent to King Frederick, on the page preceding the first sheet of music, was the following inscription:

Regis Iussu Cantio Et Reliqua Canonica Arte Resoluta.

(At the King's Command, the Song and the Remainder Resolved with Canonic Art.") Here Bach is punning on the word Canonic, since it means not only "with Canons" but also "in the best possible way". And in Latin too. The initials of this inscription are;

R I C E R C A R.

- an Italian word meaning "to seek"

And certainly there is a great deal to seek in the *Musical Offering*. It consists of one three-part fugue, one six-part fugue, ten canons, and a trio sonata. Musical scholars have concluded that the three-part fugue must be, in essence, identical with the one which Bach improvised for King Frederick. The six-part Fugue is one of Bach's most complex creations, and its theme, is, of course, the Royal Theme. That theme is a very complex one, rhythmically irregular and highly chromatic (that is, filled with tones which do not belong to the key it is in). To write a decent fugue of even two voices based on it would not

be easy for the average musician.13

Schweitzer says, however, that the Musical Offering lacks that depth of expression and insight which is Bach's other works. He has sacrificed his expressive genius to his technical genius. It must be pointed out, however, that Bach deliberately set out to write something in which the technics were more important than the melody or theme. In pursuing one element of the whole to an extreme, one diminishes other elements. This would also seem to illustrate why computers cannot write hit music, they need more than technical elements.

However, the *Musical Offering* represents one of Bach's supreme accomplishments in counterpoint. It is itself one large intellectual fugue, in which many ideas and forms have been woven together, and in which playful double meanings and subtle allusions are commonplace. And it is a very beautiful creation of the human intellect which we can appreciate forever. A few dominant features afford proper orientation at first sight or hearing, and while in the course of study one may discover unending subtleties, one still grasps the unity that holds together every single creation by Bach.

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13 D.Hofstadter: Godel, Escher & Bach: P.71

Of all the forms Bach's genius employed, the Fugue was the one in which he was most fluent. In that sphere even his contemporaries owned his abnormal talent, and he was himself conscious of an exclusive sovereignty in it. After his death his son Emmanuel published an "Art of Fugue" that Bach had written, at 4 thalers a copy. It had no sales. Then, at Emmanuel's request, Marburg (1718-1795) wrote a preface to it; and the work was re-issued, with a new cover and the recommendation of the celebrated theoretician, at the Leipzig Easter fair of 1752. Mattheson - a contemporary musician and teacher, recognised its worth and praised it, but it still did not sell. In 1756 Emmanuel had sold barely 30 copies. The hundred and thirty thalers received did not cover the cost; and the disappointed son sold the plates of his father's last work for the value of the metal.

Bach wrote his last counterpoint hours before he died.
It is the last one of three themes. It was thought to be included in the Art of Fugue by mistake by Rust, Spitta and Schweitzer. The inclusion was not a mistake. The three separate fugues on these themes are completed: Bach was just about to combine them at the point where the manuscript breaks off. The theme of the last fugue spells Bach's name. In the Weimar days Bach had remarked to his colleague Walther upon the peculiarity of the four letters of his name, as accounting for

the musical aptitudes of the Bach family. Walther mentions this at the end of the meagre little article that he devotes to his former friend in his musical dictionary [1732 - 18 years before Bach's death] and expressly says that the "remarque" came from Her Kapellmeister Bach himself. This makes it all the more curious that Bach should have waited until the last year - last few weeks - of his life before making a fugue on this interesting theme. Friedemann, when questioned by Forkel upon this point, said postively that his father had never written any fugue but this upon the family name. The various fugues on B A C H, that claim to have been composed by Johann Sebastian, therefore cannot be his.14

Apparently, when one is a sufficiently knowledgeable and skilled musician, it is possible to work out where and what Bach intended within his canons. One of the six canons sent to Frederick the Great in the Musical Offering is unfinished. The intention was to encourage the player of the canon to finish it - it is logically deducible from the first bars. Now Professor Tovey completed the unfinished fugue on Bach's name by introducing it, an achievement of scholarship which vindicates the work's earliest editor. "Moreover Professor Tovey has completed Bach's

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14 A.Schweitzer: J.S. Bach, Vol.I., P.425.

scheme by constituting a final fugue in accordance with authoritative indications of the principles on which the composer planned to build it."15

Bach died in July, 1750. His sight seemed to improve slightly, he could gradually see... "But it was the approaching splendor of death which radiated in him... He had been working almost to the last moment with his son-in-law Altnikol, dictating a chorale for organ on the hymn *Wenn vir in Hochsten Nothen sind* (When we are in direst need). But he changed the title and, instead of these words of distress, he wrote: *Vor deinem [sic] Thron tret'ich heimit [sic]* (I will appear before thy Throne) This was his last prayer and the last offering of his devout spirit.16

Andre Pirro wrote: "Never has Bach described the gentleness of death with so much inner ardour as in these pages ((BWV 8) Liebster Gott, wann werd ich sterben? [Dearest God, when will my death be?] (Ambrose, Cantatas 38-40),) where the instruments weave arabesques like garlands woven from the foliage adorning the tomb of some youth."..... But certainly the most dearly beloved instance of the hunger for release in the name of Jesus

15 D.Hofstadter: Godel, Escher & Bach: P.60/61.

16 J. Pelikan: Bach Among the Theologians: 1986: P. 41.

is the one Bach has expressed in another melody:

Komm, susser Tod,

Comm, Sel'ge Ruh!

[Come, blessed death.

Come, sweet repose!] (BWV 478) 17

Bach's roots are in the Middle Ages - he was not worried by modernity, innovation, up-to-dateness, or fashion. He was the most orderly person, inside and out. His religion, his music, his home, his family, his work were ordered. Even his visits to Dresden and Potsdam were at a regular annual time. He remained within a very small portion of Germany, never leaving German soil for one moment of his life. He was careful, kindly and correct. He very rarely indulged in any frivolity, though he could do so when he felt it was appropriate. His greatest sadnesses were the losses of his first wife and half of his children. He was also saddened by his oldest son Friedemann, who lied and got into debt from time to time.

Obviously, he was a master of his art - brilliant composer, performer, brilliant teacher. And he had the richest of inner

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17 Andre Pirro, *J.S. Bach*, trans. Mervyn Savill (New York: Crown Publishers. 1957), 59-60.]

lives - as rich as any mystic who needed years in a monastery to perfect the art of inner creativity. People who study Bach are amazed at the inexhaustible freshness of his genius, his constancy of quality of work, and his obvious delight in meeting the church liturgies repeatedly, and he composed in a practical state of prayer. His prayers, or compositions, are harmonious and un-striving - except when he uses discords to denote chaos and anguish, but he remains in complete control of them. His is a God of harmony, law, justice and triumphant good.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CONCLUSION

Bach towers above all the other case studies in the sheer ease with which he fits into his religion, his culture, his environment. He fits into his paradigm, the almost perfect product of what a whole and holy man should be. He is an excellent example of successful "Secular World Affirming" tradition, and a such renders the answers to the questions somewhat repetitive. What is more, he is a man who remained in the world living a normal life, instead of abandoning the secular in order to attain union with God. The evidence that his harmony with life was greater than most is his body of work. When he composed, or played an instrument, he communicated his experience at an extremely high level. An education is not a necessary criterion for a response to Bach's music, however intricate the composition. The sounds are beneficial to any listener. His starting point was usually a religious text, or celebration of a religious ritual within the Christian mythology, and he used tune, tone, rhythm, intervals, harmony, counterpoint, dissonance etc. to enhanced the texts. The music he composed outside the religious context is, however, just as good. He stands well within the Lutheran tradition, but one gets the feeling that he was not dependent on it. If by some means his late eighteenth century German Lutheran tradition had been

removed, he would have stood easily on his own personal cosmic trust.

He was at home with both reality and transcendence. Bach's cognitive and affective functions synchronize to a very high degree, which is another way of saying he was almost completely integrated. He was all of a piece - his music, his religion, home, life-style, work, recreation, his elements all went to make up a contented, hardworking, normal man. [1.i.]

Johann Sebastian Bach's gift was, like Rembrandt's and Leonardo's, only equalled once that I can think of, by Mozart. Even those who do not care for his music have to acknowledge that Bach was a master of masters. [1.i.i.]

Bach's *power of expression* was extended, but not outstripped, by what he wanted to say. All his work is stamped with his own personal hallmark, impossible to eliminate. His work demanded that he set texts to music so that they underlined the lessons of the day for the congregation - the service and sermon and music must form a cohesive whole. And this he did with superlative skill. It was said that the librettos he wrote himself were not nearly as good as his music, and he either took the texts directly from the Bible, or used vernacular rather than High

German. [1.i.ii.]

Bach's *self-expression was more than adequate* for what he needed to say. It is a moot point being the sort of man he was, whether he fitted in or he was born into the optimum place for his gifts. His integrated identity was informed by his religion, and he in turn informed his religion with his music.

The resulting expression shows what can be achieved by someone with content and harmonious inner and outer lives. He must have been born without personal complications, such as dogged Mozart, or Leonardo. However, in his outer life he was a stickler for courtesy and fairness, and woe betide anyone who behaved badly. The fiery temper of his youth was harnessed, not extinguished.

[1.i.iii.]

Religion:

Bach stood back from *reality as a whole* easily and comfortably. Whenever he wanted to write music, he turned naturally to his God for all compositions, religious or secular. What he *felt* appeared beautifully in his compositions. He could feel his religion, his music, and material life with the greatest intensity, though the feelings towards each were necessarily different. He rested in his trust and faith in God, his gift for musical expression gave him great joy, and he loved his home

and family. [1.ii.i.]

Bach *belonged*, thoroughly, to a reality which was well *worthwhile*. His *cosmic trust* took the gratitudinal form of giving the best music he could on every occasion, his own matchless gift. For example, his second wife enjoyed playing the piano and the pieces he wrote for her are enchanting. He took musical expression into new technical and symbolic levels. His faith appeared, from his music, to be deep and unshakable, but he was known to call on God to help his "unbelief", but in a way which would grow his trust rather than fight doubt. [1.ii.ii.]

Bach seems to have been remarkably humble about his gifts, having no overt *sense of providence* at all. He even borrowed from other composers, and used their themes as starting points. He was very fine organist, but always acknowledged Buxtehude to be his master. [1.ii.iii.]

His Lutheran *religious tradition* appeared to fit him like a glove. As Pelikan says, it is only with modern day scholarship and criticism that holes can be picked in his Lutheranism, i.e. that he strayed over one or two doctrinal barriers, but certainly none of his contemporaries noticed it. Neither did he. But the point here is that his profound religious understanding came from

his own personal experience, and was not the product of study of Luther's doctrine, or indeed of anyone else's. [1.ii.iv.]

In Bach's time, the Lutheran church had good *institutional standing* and suitable for most of the German population. Bach's official standing in the Church was not important - he was a servant of the Leipzig burgers and St. Thomas' church, and he was never consulted about church matters other than music. His contemporaries admired and respected him, it was an honour for them to have such an outstanding musician in their employ. There was no controversy about him whatsoever, even though as a young man he had clashed with the Mulhausen Pietism. [1.ii.v.]

Shaping experience or context:
Bach's background was music, his training was in music, his vocation was music, he enjoyed writing music. He stayed with it - it would never have occurred to him to do anything else.

Identity:
As stated earlier, Bach seems to be a straightforward, contented human being. One gains the impression when studying him that there was no pressure in his *identity,* no *driving to excel.* C.S. Terry says "He was a choleric gentleman," but there is no sense of urgency or sign or choler in his work. [2.ii.i.]

Bach remained well-entrenched in the prevailing *perspective* and stances of his church throughout his life. His religion was as fundamental to his experience as his music was, they enhanced each other to an optimum degree. [2.ii.ii.]

He had a very strong *corporate sense*. He worked for the Church Council, in a time when good church music was the hallmark of a successful and well-run borough. He functioned quite happily with the symbols and beliefs of his contemporaries and employers. He felt no need to be other than he was - he had no distortions. Contemporary reports say that his conversation was highly educated and excellent. [2.ii.iii.]

Bach lived his religion, and did his best to impart his own insights to everyone else through his music. [3.]

Bach's *cosmic trust* was complete, the "whole" was *trustworthy*, and he thoroughly *belonged* to both secular and transcendent realities. His knowledge of the transcendent was very rich, and very richly expressed. His reality was whole, composite, functional and growing. [3.i.]

His faith and trust showed in the interpretation of thought into

music. He pondered again and again on the Biblical message, rendering it into a universal form. [3.ii.]

Bach is different from the other case studies in that he fits almost without remainder into the prevailing orthodoxy. It would appear he did not strive for this, he was naturally content with where and who he was, and it would appear that he was without such characteristics which are inclined to make life difficult. This is not to say that he dull, or ordinary. On the contrary. With his immense inner life (which never dried up) flowing out of him, his kindness, hospitality, his complete honesty and his total *genuine-ness*, to have known him would have been a rare experience.

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CHAPTER FIVE

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

PARTS I TO VI

CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

PART I

Winston Spencer Churchill was born November, 1874, at Blenheim Palace, his father's ancestral home and the seat of the Dukes of Marlborourgh. His family was not only aristocratic and prominent.

When Winston Churchill grew up, the aristocracy were the hereditary leaders in most of the professions, Law, Army and Navy, Church, politics, diplomats, major land-owners, they all met again in the House of Lords. Knowing who was related to whom presented one of the most complex areas a child had to learn.

Violet Bonham Carter, a friend of Churchill's, wrote of the England of early this century:

"Powerful, prosperous, peace-loving, with the seas all round us and the Royal Navy on the seas, the social, economic, international order seemed to our unseeing eyes as firmly fixed on earth as the signs of the Zodiac in the sky.

"It was a time of booming trade, of great prosperity and wealth in which the pageant of London Society took place year after year in a setting of traditional dignity and beauty. The great houses - Devonshire, Dorchester, Grosvenor, Stafford and Lansdowne House - had not yet been converted into museums, hotels and flats, and there we danced through the long summer nights till dawn. The great country-houses still flourished in their glory, and on their lawns in the green shade of the trees the art of human intercourse was exquisitely practised by men and women not yet enslaved by household cares and chores who still had time to read, to talk, to listen and to think."

"....But there was another world with which his party was concerned, the world of the many. For though in those days it was easy to be rich it was also easy to be very poor. Dire, grinding poverty, that cruel ugly ghost, still stalked the streets in that hey-day of our prosperity. ...low wages... no insurance, sick benefits, pensions, except charity and the workhouse.

"The Liberal Government was determined to lay this ugly spectre

of poverty, to redress the wrongs of the Industrial Revolution and to spread a net over the abyss."[1]

In the Preface to his book, *My Early Life*, first published in 1930, he says that he finds he has drawn a picture of a vanished age. If he, then, found the customs and values changed, for us now how different again does their society seem.

His parents, Lord and Lady Randolph Churchill, pursued their social and sporting obligations with enthusiasm and without worry for the children, as was the custom. His father became an M.P., and held a few government posts. Churchill adored his charming, intelligent, beautiful American mother. She was, for her era, very fit. She rode and hunted continually. She stayed brilliant and distant from Winston until Randolph died.

His real mother was his nurse, or nanny, Mrs. Everest. The British Nanny, says Violet Bonham Carter, was an essentially English institution of great permanence and power. The Nanny was the ultimate in setting the well-to-do parents free to do what they wished. This institution was not always a happy one, but the Churchill boys were most fortunate, Mrs. Everest was a loving

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[1] Violet Bonham Carter: Winston Churchill as I knew Him. P. 133 & 135.

and kindly nanny. She was employed when Churchill was about two months old - plain, solid, reliable, honest, and self-sacrificing. She presided over his nursery and his routine was ordered and secure. Both Winston and his brother Jack loved her deeply.

Lord Randolph was not an easy man or a good father. His sons admired and loved him, and to the end of his life Churchill regretted his father's early death, which he blamed for the lack of closeness in their relationship. Lord Randolph's letters to Churchill frequently contain strong criticisms, demands, slighting remarks, in fact none of Winston's efforts to please his father met with any success. He regularly incurred his father's sarcastic anger. In spite of this, Churchill remained steadfast and loyal to him. He died when Winston was 20 years old. He wrote of their relationship in *My Early Life - A Roving Commission* :

"But if ever I began to show the slightest idea of comradeship, he was immediately offended; and when once I suggested that I might help his private secretary to write some of his letters, he froze me into stone. I know now that this would have been only a passing phase. Had he lived for another four or five years, he could not have done without me. But there were no four or five years! Just as friendly relations were ripening into an Entente,

and an alliance or at least a military agreement seemed to my mind not beyond the bounds of reasonable endeavour, he vanished for ever."[2]

The Duke of Marlborough was appointed Viceroy of Ireland, and he, the Duchess, his unmarried daughters, the Randolph Churchills, Jack and Winston moved to Dublin. Winston's first memories were of Dublin and the Fenians.

"I even recall a phrase he (his grandfather, the Duke of Marlborough) used: 'and with a withering volley he shattered the enemy's line.' I quite understood that he was speaking about war and fighting and that a 'volley' meant what the black-coated soldiers (Riflemen) used to do with loud bangs so often in the Phoenix Park where I was taken for my morning walks. This, I think, is my first coherent memory."[3] He was unafraid of the bangs of the rifles. This was to stay with him for the rest of his life. He never flinched at passing bullets or bombs.

On a visit to Lord Portarlington Churchill (age four and a half) recalled, with military emphasis:

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[2] P.60. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

[3] P. 15. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930

"The central point in my memory is a tall white stone tower which we reached after a considerable drive. I was told it had been blown up by Oliver Cromwell. I understood definitely that he had blown up all sorts of things and was therefore a very great man."[4]

As was usual in those days, when he was old enough, a governess was engaged to teach him. Reading and writing he learnt easily, but his lifelong battle with formal mathematics began. His difficulty was congenital, not acquired:

"Letters after all had only got to be known, and when they stood together in a certain way one recognised their formation and that it meant a certain sound or word which one uttered when pressed sufficiently. But the figures were tied into all sorts of tangles and did things to one another which it was extremely difficult to forecast with complete accuracy. You had to say what they did each time they were tied up together, and the Governess apparently attached enormous importance to the answer being exact. If it was not right, it was wrong. It was not any use being 'nearly right'. In some cases these figures got into debt with one another: you had to borrow one or carry one, and afterwards you had to pay back the one you had borrowed. These

[4] P 16. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930

complications cast a steadily gathering shadow over my daily life." [5]

Lord Randolph Churchill once employed a Miss Hutchinson as governess for his son Winston. One day a parlourmaid was summoned by a bell to Winston's room. On arrival the maid asked Miss Hutchinson, who was there with Winston, why she had rung for her. But Winston answered: "I rang. Take away Miss Hutchinson. She is very cross." [6]

At the age of 7, he was sent to school. In Churchill's official biography "Youth", Vol. 1., Randolph Churchill says: "The neglect and lack of interest in him shown by his parents were remarkable, even judged by the standards of late Victorian and Edwardian days. His letters to his mother from his various schools abound in pathetic requests for letters and for visits, if not from her, from Mrs Everest and his brother Jack."[7]

He was very literal, and realistic. Very soon after he was left at his new school, he was given a Latin grammar, and instructed

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[5] P.17. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930

[6] P.32. The Wit of Sir Winston, Sykes & Sproat, 1965.

[7] P. 45. Youth. Vol 1. 1874-1900. Randolph. S. Churchill.

to learn the first declension of "Mensa". He had a good memory and had no trouble reciting it. But he made the form-master angry by persistent inquiries as to the wisdom of ADDRESSING a table, which he stoutly maintained he never did. He was told that impertinence was severely punished, and subsequently Churchill firmly and stubbornly disassociated himself from Latin and Greek. He draws a picture of a Victorian school for the 7 to 12 year olds:

"The Form Master's observations about punishment were by no means without their warrant at St. James's School. Flogging with the birch in accordance with the Eton fashion was a great feature in its curriculum. But I am sure no Eton boy, and certainly no Harrow boy of my day, ever received such a cruel flogging as this Head-master was accustomed to inflict upon the little boys who were in his care and power. They exceeded in severity anything that would be tolerated in any of the Reformatories under the Home Office. My reading in later life has supplied me with some possible explanations of his temperament. Two or three times a month the whole school was marshalled in the Library, and one or more delinquents were haled off to an adjoining apartment by the two head boys, and there flogged until they bled freely, while the rest sat quaking, listening to their screams. This form of correction was strongly reinforced by frequent religious services

of a somewhat High Church character in the chapel. Mrs. Everest was very much against the Pope. If the truth were known, she said, he was behind the Fenians. She herself was Low Church, and her dislike of ornaments and ritual, and generally her extremely unfavourable opinion of the Supreme Pontiff, had prejudiced me strongly against that personage and all religious practices supposed to be associated with him. I therefore did not derive much comfort from the spiritual side of my education at this juncture. On the other hand, I experienced the fullest applications of the secular arm.

"How I hated this school, and what a life of anxiety I lived there for more than two years. I made very little progress at my lessons, and none at all at games."[8]

Even at that tender age, he refused to bend or be coerced into doing what was meaningless to him. He must have been an exasperating and baffling child, stubborn and indomitable. His unbreakability would have egged an unbalanced headmaster on - no wonder he experienced the "fullest applications of the secular arm."

"My teachers saw me at once backward and precocious, reading

[8] P.26. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930

books beyond my years and yet at the bottom of the Form. They were offended. They had large resources of compulsion at their disposal, but I was stubborn. Where my reason, imagination or interest were not engaged, I would not or I could not learn. In all the twelve years I was at school no one ever succeeded in making me write a Latin verse or learn any Greek except the alphabet. I do not at all excuse myself for this foolish neglect of opportunities procured at so much expense by my parents and brought so forcibly to my attention by my preceptors. Perhaps if I had been introduced to the ancients through their history and customs, instead of through their grammar and syntax, I might have had a better record."[9]

He was removed from this school because of ill-health and sent to a school in Brighton. Mrs. Everest showed his mother the weals on his back when he came home. He was nine years old. As he was now thought to be delicate, he was sent to school which was kinder, gentler,less pretentious and less expensive. It was also near a celebrated doctor, fortunate because he later got pneumonia and would have died but for this doctor.

His distrust of organized religion was solidly grounded at his first school. He associated High Church rituals and formulas

[9] P.27. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930

with punishment, papacy and hypocrisy. However, his rebellion against High Church rituals was handled with tact and skill. He wrote:

"My partiality for Low Church principles which I had acquired from Mrs. Everest led me into one embarrassment. We often attended the service in the Chapel Royal at Brighton. Here the school was accommodated in pews which ran North and South. In consequence, when the Apostle's Creed was recited, everyone turned to the East. I was sure Mrs. Everest would have considered this practice Popish, and I conceived it my duty to testify against it. I therefore stood stolidly to my front. I was conscious of having created a 'sensation'. I prepared myself for martyrdom. However, when we got home no comment of any kind was made upon my behaviour. I was almost disappointed, and looked forward to the next occasion for a further demonstration of my faith. But when it came, the school was shown into different pews in the Chapel Royal facing East, and no action was called for from any one of us when the Creed was said. I was puzzled to find my true course and duty. It seemed excessive to turn away from the East. Indeed I could not feel that such a step would be justified. I therefore became willy-nilly a passive conformist.

"It was thoughtful and ingenious of these old ladies to have treated my scruples so tenderly. The results repaid their care. Never again have I caused or felt trouble on such a point. Not being resisted or ill-treated, I yielded myself complacently to a broad-minded tolerance and orthodoxy."[10]

At the age of 12, he was sent to Harrow: he had no Latin or Greek, or Maths, and was put in the slow low stream. But the English teacher for this form was Mr. Somervell, ..."a most delightful man, to whom my debt is great - was charged with the duty of teaching the stupidest boys the most disregarded thing- namely to write mere English." Churchill had three years of this - "Thus I got into my bones the essential structure of the ordinary British sentence - which is a noble thing."[11] And he had this to say of religious language:

"I am very conservative in all these things. I always spell the Czar, "Czar". As for the Revised Version of the Bible and the alterations in the Prayer Book and especially the Marriage Service, they are grievous."[12]

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[10] P.27. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930

[11] P.31. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

[12] P.38. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

He finally passed out of Harrow with the minimum educational requirements. The Headmaster himself had carefully coached him in rudimentary Latin, and by a lucky accident the Maths exam contained a question which he had learnt by heart. His remarks about the place occupied by Latin, Greek and Maths in the British Education system are caustic. He was crammed for the Sandhurst entrance examination by an excellent teacher called Mayo, and even had a "vision" of mathematics:

"I had a feeling once about Mathematics, that I saw it all- Depth beyond depth was revealed to me - the Byss and the Abyss. I saw, as one might see the transit of Venus - or even the Lord Mayor's show, a quantity passing through infinity and changing its sign from plus to minus. I saw exactly how it happened and why the tergiversation was inevitable: and how the one step involved all the others. It was like politics. But it was after dinner and I let it go!"[13]

He was already finding that if what he wanted was important enough, he could invariably achieve it:

"Which brings me to my conclusion upon Free Will and Predestination: namely - let the reader mark it - they are

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[13] P.41. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

identical.

"I have always loved butterflies. In Uganda I saw glorious butterflies the colour of whose wings changed from the deepest russet brown to the most brilliant blue, according to the angle from which you saw them. In even Brazil as everyone knows there are butterflies of this kind even larger and more vivid. The contrast is extreme. You could not conceive colour effects more violently opposed; but it is the same butterfly. The butterfly is the Fact - gleaming, fluttering, settling for an instant with wings fully spread to the sun, then vanishing in the shades of the forest. Whether you believe in Free Will or Predestination, all depends on the slanting glimpse you had of the colour of his wings - which are in fact at least two colours at the same time. But I have not quitted and renounced the Mathematick to fall into the Metaphysick." [14]

Another of his childhood adventures took him very near death. It is interesting that his awareness of danger included a strong colour impression. He went for a row on the Lake in Lausanne with a friend and they abandoned the boat for a swim. The boat had an awning and was blown away from them.

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[14] P.42. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930

"The sun played upon the sparkling blue waters; the wonderful panorama of mountains and valleys, the gay hotels and villas still smiled. But I now saw Death as near as I believe I have ever seen him. He was swimming in the water at our side, whispering from time to time in the rising wind which continued to carry the boat away from us at about the same speed we could swim. No help was near. Unaided we could never reach the shore. I now swam for life. [Fortunately he was a good swimmer.] Twice I reached within a yard of the boat and each time a gust carried it just beyond my reach; but by a supreme effort I caught hold of its side in the nick of time before a still stronger gust bulged the red awning again. I scrambled in, and rowed back for my companion who, though tired, had not apparently realized the dull yellow glare of mortal peril that had so suddenly played round us."[15]

He passed, with luck, his exams into Sandhurst, and learned about war, its prosecution, tactics, pleasures. He became a cavalry cadet and played polo. During his five month vacation he searched for a real war to go and take part in. There was a guerilla war going on in Cuba, which had revolted against Spain. He got to Cuba, armed with superb introductions, and eventually came under fire, so achieving his objective. Prolonged peace

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[15] P.51. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

had made the officers who had taken part in REAL war very old. He then went to India with his cavalry regiment, the 4th Hussars. When he landed, he dislocated his shoulder very badly, and it was seriously weakened for the rest of his life. In retrospect he considered this good luck, however, as he was not able to use a sword during the British Cavalry's last charge at Omdurman, and the Mauser pistol he carried was conspicuously more efficient.

While in India, in 1896, Churchill felt the "desire for learning". The hot and humid climate dictated long periods of inactivity after lunch, and it was made clear to energetic young subalterns that they were to keep quiet during the heat of the day. Churchill embarked on an enormous reading program:
"Of tactics I had a grip: on politics I had a view: but a concise compendious outline of Ethics was a novelty not to be locally obtained."[16]

He asked his mother to send him suitable books, ethics, history, philosophy, economics, biographies, particularly military and political ones. She sent him books every month. He started with Gibbon's Decline & Fall of the Roman Empire, and did not look back. Macaulay he thoroughly enjoyed - Mrs. Everest's

[16] P.123. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

husband was a prison warder who greatly admired Macaulay - but discovered him to be a charlatan. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Schopenhauer, Malthus, Darwin. "It was a curious education. First because I approached it with an empty, hungry mind, and with fairly strong jaws; and what I got I bit; secondly because I had no one to tell me: 'This is discredited'. 'You should read the answer to that by so and so; the two together will give you the gist of the argument'. 'There is a much better book on that subject'."[17]

It is possible that this indiscriminate reading contributed to Churchill's method of dealing with incoming information. He had very few preconceived ideas about who was heroic or cowardly, what constituted morality and which adaptations of morality were adequate or which should be condemned. Inevitably, he had to use his own judgement and intuition as a starting point. But throughout his life he approached new spheres of knowledge and work with an open and original mind. In the future, his wife and his private secretary, John Colville, were to say that they would never anticipate what Churchill's views would be, or how he would solve a certain problem. His processes of assimilation and deduction were unique. Much later Violet Bonham Carter was to say of him: "He was once described by an acute observer as

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[17] P. 127. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

"thinking with his heart". It would have been equally true to say of him that he felt with his mind. Throughout his life his feelings always penetrated and often swayed his intellectual processes. No doubt there were moments when his emotions vitiated his judgment, but far more often his heart acted as his mind's pathfinder and guide. His emotional response to situations and events was nearly always a true one. The right way to his mind was through his heart and his imagination. ..... His intellect was often inaccessible. His heart was an open city."[18] Some of Churchill's bitterest set-backs came about because of his ability to see a situation as a whole, and his inability to make others aware of it.

Soon the thorny question of religion arose:

"My various readings during the next two years led me to ask myself questions about religion. Hitherto I had dutifully accepted everything I had been told. Even in the holidays I always had to go once a week to church, and at Harrow there were three services every Sunday, besides morning and evening prayers throughout the week. All this was very good. I accumulated in those years so fine a surplus in the Bank of Observance that I have been drawing confidently upon it every since. Weddings,

[18] P.34. Violet Bonham Carter. 1965.

christenings, and funerals have brought in a steady annual income, and I have never made too close enquiries about the state of my account. It might well even be that I should find an overdraft. But now in these bright days of youth my attendances were well ahead of the Sundays. In the Army too there were regular church parades, and sometimes I marched the Roman Catholics to church, and sometimes the Protestants. Religious toleration in the British Army has spread till it overlapped the regions of indifference. No one was ever hampered or prejudiced on account of his religion. Everyone had the regulation facilities for its observance. In India the deities of a hundred creeds were placed by respectful routine in the Imperial Pantheon. In the regiment we sometimes used to argue questions like "whether we should live again in another world after this was over?" "Whether we have ever lived before", "Whether we remember and meet each other after death or merely start again like Buddhists?"

There was general agreement that if you tried your best to live an honourable life and did your duty and were faithful to friends and not unkind to the weak and poor, it did not matter much what you believed or disbelieved. All would come out right. This is what nowadays I suppose would be called "The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness." [19]

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[19] P. 127. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

"Some of the senior officers also dwelt upon the value of the Christian religion to women ("It helps to keep them straight"); and also generally to the lower orders ("Nothing can give them a good time here, but it makes them more contented to think they will get one hereafter"). Christianity, it appeared, had also a disciplinary value, especially when presented through the Church of England. It made people want to be respectable, to keep up appearances, and so saved lots of scandals. From this standpoint ceremonies and ritual ceased to be of importance. They were merely the same idea translated into different languages to suit different races and temperaments. Too much religion of any kind, however, was a bad thing. Among natives especially, fanaticism was highly dangerous and roused them to murder, mutiny or rebellion. Such is, I think a fair gauging of the climate of opinion in which I dwelt." [20]

This last paragraph encapsulates very well the contemporary military view of religion - necessary but tiresome, useful under certain circumstances, but the real issues were taken care of by the armed forces.

Churchill resolved his personal questions about religion

[20] P.128. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

practically and to his own satisfaction:

"I now began to read a number of books which challenged the whole religious education I had received at Harrow. The first of these books was *The Martyrdom of Man* by Winwood Reade. This was Colonel Brabazon's great book. He had read it many times over and regarded it as a sort of Bible. It is in fact a concise and well-written universal history of mankind, dealing in harsh terms with the mysteries of all religions and leading to the depressing conclusion that we simply go out like candles. I was much startled and indeed offended by what I read. But then I found that Gibbon evidently held the same view; and finally Mr. Lecky, in his *Rise and Influence of Rationalism* and *History of European Morals*, both of which I read this winter, established in my mind a predominantly secular view. For a time I was indignant at having been told so many untruths, as I then regarded them, by the school-masters and clergy who had guided my youth. Of course if I had been at University my difficulties might have been resolved by the eminent professors and divines who are gathered there. At any rate, they would have shown me equally convincing books putting the opposite point of view. As it was, I passed through a violent and aggressive anti-religious phase when, had it lasted, might easily have made me a nuisance. My poise was restored during the next few years by frequent contact with

danger. I found that whatever I might think and argue, I did not hesitate to ask for special protection when about to come under the fire of the enemy: nor to feel sincerely grateful when I got home safe to tea. I even asked for lesser things than not to be killed too soon, and nearly always in these years, and indeed throughout my life, I got what I wanted. This practice seemed perfectly natural, and just as strong and real as the reasoning process which contradicted it so sharply. Moreover the practice was comforting and the reasoning led nowhere. I therefore acted in accordance with my feelings without troubling to square such conduct with the conclusions of thought." [21]

This was very important. It actually lays the pattern for gut feel, intuition, emotional reasoning to became part of his mode of engagement. He had no compunction about following "heart" promptings rather than intellectual ones, and is surprised to find Bishops and clergy making heavy weather about reconciling the Bible story with modern scientific and historical knowledge. If the letter is real, why bother about a travel-stained envelope with a bad postmark? The other unique thing about him is that he retained this mode of engagement, and did not let superior or more agile intellects swamp him with arguments and logical suppositions. He met Pascal in Bartletts Familiar Quotations:

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[21] P.129. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

"In this or some other similar book I came across a French saying which seemed singularly apposite. 'Le coeur a ses raisons, que la raison ne connait pas.' It seemed to me that it would be very foolish to discard the reasons of the heart for those of the head. Indeed I could not see why I should not enjoy them both. I did not worry about the inconsistency of thinking one way and believing the other. It seemed good to let the mind explore so far as it could the paths of thought and logic, and also good to pray for help and succour, and be thankful when they came. I could not feel that the Supreme Creator who gave us our minds as well as our souls would be offended if they did not always run smoothly together in double harness. After all He must have foreseen this from the beginning and of course He would understand it all."[22]

"The human brain cannot comprehend infinity but the discovery of mathematics enables it to be handled quite easily. The idea that nothing is true except what we can comprehend is silly, and that ideas which our minds cannot reconcile are mutually destructive, sillier still. ..... I therefore adopted quite early in life a system of believing whatever I wanted to believe, while at the same time leaving reason to pursue unfettered

[22] P. 130. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

whatever paths she was capable of treading." [23]

This is supremely practical. Science, scientific method grew apace in the latter nineteenth century, and the Church's handling of the growth of knowledge vs. unquestioning belief was not good. In modern times the importance given to intellectual critical faculties has effectively stifled communication about belief or intuition which arises instinctively, and casts doubt on any experience which cannot be logically explained. Churchill firmly kept all within the bounds of practical common sense. In many cases his foresight was tantamount to prophecy.

Roughly at this time, he wrote to his mother:

22 December [1897]
.....Bullets - to a philosopher my dear Mamma - are not worth considering. Besides I am so conceited I do not believe the Gods would create so potent a being as myself for so prosaic an ending. Any way it does not matter ..."[24]

and 24 August, 1898:
"...Within the next ten days there will be a general action -

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[23] P.131. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

[24] P.363. Winston S. Churchill: Youth. Randolph Churchill.

perhaps a vy severe one. I may be killed. I do not think so. But if I am you must avail yourself of the consolations of philosophy and reflect on the utter insignificance of all human beings. I want to come back and shall hope all will be well. But I can assure you I do not flinch - though I do not accept the Christian or any other form of religious belief. We shall see what will happen; and in that spirit I would leave the subject. Nothing - not even the certain knowledge of approaching destruction would make me turn back now - even if I could with honour.

But I shall come back afterwards the wiser and stronger for my gamble. And then we will think of other and wider spheres of action. I have plenty of faith - in what I do not know - that I shall not be hurt. After all there will be nothing hotter than 16th Sept of last year, and I am sure that of the next world we may say - If any then better..." [25]

The advice, complacent heroism and lofty thought expressed in this letter are splendid. It abounds in exuberant, conceited and unquenchable male youth.

His thoughts on fashionable existentialism - bearing in mind this was written in 1930:

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[25] P.406. Winston S. Churchill: Youth. Randolph Churchill

"Some of my cousins who had the great advantage of University education used to tease me with arguments to prove that nothing has any existence except what we think of it. The whole creation is but a dream; all phenomena are imaginary. You create your own universe as you go along. The stronger your imagination, the more variegated your universe. When you leave off dreaming, the universe ceases to exist. These amusing mental acrobatics are all right to play with. They are perfectly harmless and perfectly useless. I warn my younger readers only to treat them as a game. The metaphysicians will have the last word and defy you to disprove their absurd propositions.

I always rested upon the following argument which I devised for myself many years ago. We look up in the sky and see the sun. Our eyes are dazzled and our senses record the fact. So here is this great sun standing apparently on no better foundation than our physical senses. But happily there is a method, apart altogether from our physical senses, of testing the reality of the sun. It is by mathematics. By means of prolonged processes of mathematics, entirely separate from the senses, they predict by pure reason that a black spot will pass across the sun on a certain day. Astronomers are able to calculate when an eclipse will occur. .....When it is persisted that we should

have to be told about the calculations and use our ears for that purpose, I reply that the mathematical process has a reality and virtue in itself, and that once discovered it constitutes a new and independent factor. I am also at this point accustomed to reaffirm with emphasis my conviction that the sun is real, and also that it is hot - in fact as hot as Hell, and that if the metaphysicians doubt it they should go there and see." [26]

Throughout his life, Churchill used his social contacts mercilessly. As mentioned, he was related to or acquainted with almost all the upper echelons of society, and whenever he wanted to join in an adventure he would get his mother or other relation to introduce him to the appropriate people, and he would badger them until he got his way.

Sir Bindon Blood, leading the Malakand Field Force to quell a small rebellion in the North of India, could only accommodate Churchill as a correspondent, as his staff was complete. Churchill went, so discovering journalism, and whisky in the hot dry conditions. Neither was a momentary acquirement. Equally, years later when in Russia for the first time, his iron constitution and practice allowed him to consume vodka for vodka with Stalin, without visible effect, thus gaining Russian

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[26] P. 131. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

admiration. Theodore Roosevelt was considered a wimp because of his complete failure to drink or eat anywhere near a manly quantity.

After this expedition, Churchill wrote his first book, *The Malakand Field Force.* He asked Lord Beresford to read the proofs, who botched and bungled the job. However, in spite of the mangled editing, the reviews of the book were very good. Until this time he had experienced only adverse criticism. There is a certain pathos in his reminder to his readers that he "had never been praised before". Until this moment (except perhaps at polo), no encouragement had ever come his way. "the only compliments which had ever been made upon my work at school had been 'Indifferent', 'Untidy', 'Slovenly', 'Bad'. 'Very Bad', etc."[27] Buckets of cold water had descended in a steady downpour on his head. Yet they had failed to quench or even to damp his tough, invincible self-confidence. Now it was vindicated, endorsed by public opinion, high and low." [28]

His determination to be at the forefront continued. He had no time to wait for events to come to him, he sought them. Being an aristocrat, he could have waited and frittered on in the army

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[27] P.154. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

[28] Violet Bonham Carter: 1965.

and eventually entered politics when he had enough money and still achieved what would have been a good career. That was not enough for him, right from the start. He had to cram in as much experience and knowledge as he could, to weather as many fiery baptisms as possible, so equipping himself to perform a GREAT task, though he did not know what it was. There is this sense of urgency to test himself in all weathers.

He returned from India only to try and organize himself on Kitchener's staff for the Soudan Campaign. Kitchener flatly refused to have him. Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister, had read and enjoyed *The Malakand Field Force* and asked to meet the author. He was most complimentary and asked Churchill to let him know if there was anything he could do for him. A few days later Churchill asked Lord Salisbury to intercede with Kitchener. He did, and Kitchener refused Lord Salisbury's request. However, Churchill was as determined as Kitchener, and got himself attached to the 21st Lancers, whose officers were recruited by the War Office, not the Sirdar of Egypt.

Churchill joined in the campaign, and had brief contact with Kitchener. It was during the Battle of Omdurman that he took part in the last ever British cavalry charge. He returned unharmed to England, and to augment his income (which was

inadequate since his father died and his debts had been cleared) he wrote another book called *The River War*. He also contracted to write columns for two or three newspapers.

Churchill's son Randolph comments on his father at this time:

"A great sense of destiny, of power and of greatness was already deeply impregnated in Churchill. He was, by this time, markedly egocentric and self-expressive. This alienated many of his contemporaries and to a lesser extent those who were older than he was and who had known his father and were fascinated by the thought that he would prove to be a serviceable successor. Already by this time he had become an object of conversation and controversy. It was facile to say that he was trading on his father's reputation, that he pulled all the strings he could and made use of all the influence which he had inherited. But none could gainsay his courage or the ardour of his ambition. All this, however, did not make him very popular. He was still living in the twilight of a Victorian era in which many of his activities were regarded by older people as 'ungentlemanly'.
..... As these pages unfold, it will be seen that though he took the fullest opportunity of connections which he had inherited from his father, it was his own daemon which led him on to fame, prosperity and honour.' [29]

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[29] P.396. Winston S. Churchill: Youth. Randolph Churchill

He was by this time strongly attracted to a career in politics. In July 1898 he had made a political speech at Bradford, and he wrote to his mother:

"The conclusions I form are these - with practice I shall obtain great power on a public platform. My impediment is no hindrance. My voice sufficiently powerful, and - this is vital - my ideas & modes of thought are pleasing to men.

It may be perhaps the hand of Fate, which by a strange coincidence closed one line of advance and aspiration in the morning and in the evening pointed out another with an encouraging gesture. At any rate my decision to resign my commission is definite.

With best love, Your ever loving son

Winston [30]

He began marshalling the tools of oratory deliberately and carefully.

Churchill's next adventure was advancing up the Nile as part of Kitchener's army. Churchill was never intimidated by Kitchener,

[30] P.396. Winston S. Churchill: Youth. Randolph Churchill.

even though Churchill was very junior indeed, and Kitchener himself was an extraordinarily fierce and proud man. They had a strange relationship, marked by incidences of extreme kindness, extreme exasperation and anger, and eventually horrified lack of trust. As a war correspondent, Churchill tilted at him happily, giving him praise in his impertinent writings for his efficiency and orderly command of an army during battle, but criticizing him strongly for his callous treatment of the wounded, and for permitting desecration of a religious place.

"To do justice to a great man, discriminating criticism is necessary," wrote Churchill, "Gush, however quenching, is always insipid." A full measure of praise is awarded to the Sirdar's strategy, foresight, personal force and extraordinary economy, to his flashes of genius (of which the greatest was the construction of the Desert Railway), to his grasp of the whole conditions of Sudan war revealing "a breadth and strength of intellect which transcend the limitations of the expert".

Having thus given him his just due he adds: "But the meanest historian owes something to truth," and proceeds to expose "the reverse of the medal". He tells us that the General, "who never spared himself, cared little for others", treated all men like machines, incontinently flung aside the comrade who had served

with him in peace and peril as soon as he had ceased to be of use. "The Sirdar looked only to the soldiers who could march and fight. The wounded Egyptian, and latterly the wounded British soldier, did not excite his interest, and of all the departments of his army the one neglected was that concerned with the care of the sick and injured".

But his harshest condemnation is reserved for the desecration of the Mahdi's tomb:

This place had been for more than ten years the most sacred and holy thing that the people of the Sudan knew. Their miserable lives had perhaps been brightened, perhaps in some way ennobled by the contemplation of something which they did not quite understand, but which they believed asserted a protecting influence. It had gratified that instinctive desire for the mystic which all human creatures possess, and which is perhaps the strongest reason for believing in a progressive destiny and a future state. By Sir Herbert Kitchener's orders the Tomb had been profaned and razed to the ground. The corpse of the Mahdi was dug up. The head was separated from the body... the limbs and trunk were flung into the Nile. Such was the chivalry of the

conquerors!".[31]

Denouncing this "wicked act, of which the true Christian, no less than the philosopher, must express his abhorrence", Winston Churchill wrote that if in the future the Sudan were administered on such principles "then it would be better if Gordon had never given his life nor Kitchener won his victories." [32]
Today we find this barbaric and shocking. But in 1898 it took considerable courage to write such criticisms of England's Hero, who was rewarded with the Governor-Generalship of the lands he had conquered. Kitchener was deeply offended by this upstart subaltern who doubled as War Correspondent for the Morning Post, and the "thorn pricked on under the skin for many years to come."

Reading the *River War* should exorcise the widespread misconception of Churchill's attitude towards war. As it reveals, even in those early years, he saw it plain, in all its horror, squalor, and inhumanity. On hearing of the death of his comrade, Robert Grenfell, cut down in the Lancer's charge, he wrote: "The realization came home with awful force that war,

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[31] The River War, Vol. II, P. 211-212

[32] The River War, Vol. II, P. 214.

disguise it as you may, is but a dirty, shoddy business, which only a fool would undertake. Nor was it until the night that I again recognized that there are some things that have to be done, no matter what the cost may be."[33]

"Amid these scenes of human torment he reflected that if, as we are told, vengeance is sweet, no one should drain the cup to the bottom. "The dregs are often filthy-tasting." And he ends the chapter with the prophetic words: "The Dervish host was scattered and destroyed. Their end, however, only anticipates that of the victors; for Time, which laughs at science, as science laughs at valour, will in due course contemptuously brush both combatants away." [34]

Churchill fought a by-election at Oldham as the Conservative candidate, which he lost. Then in October 1899 the Boer War broke out. He was offered the job of War Correspondent of the Morning Post, with a minimum of four months employment. He learnt from a friend of his that the Boer Republics were well armed and well prepared, and he was relieved that the war would not be an entirely one-sided affair! The War Office or Sir

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[33] The River War, Vol.II, P.221-2.

[34] P.43. Violet Bonham Carter. 1965.

Redvers Buller refused to read any of the recent information on South Africa, and so did not appreciate the difficulty and magnitude of the task. Later Churchill wrote of war:

"Let us learn our lessons. Never, never, never believe any war will be smooth and easy, or that anyone who embarks on that strange voyage can measure the tides and hurricanes he will encounter. The Statesman who yields to war fever must realise that once the signal is given, he is no longer the master of policy but the slave of unforeseeable and uncontrollable events. Antiquated War Offices, weak, incompetent or arrogant Commanders, untrustworthy allies, hostile neutrals, malignant Fortune, ugly surprises, awful miscalculations - all take their seats at the Council Board on the morrow of a declaration of war. Always remember, however sure you are that you can easily win, that there would not be a war if the other man did not think he also had a chance." [35]

He sailed to Durban on the *Dunottar Castle.* He travelled out with Sir Redvers Buller and his staff. He used his Press Correspondent's privileges to the utmost, going by train from Cape Town to East London, via De Aar. He sailed from East London to Durban, and headed up to Pietermaritzburg, where he found a

[35] P.246. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

friend who was badly injured but who told him how skillful the Boers were with horses and rifles. A few days later he went with Captain Haldane on the armoured train, was captured by the Boers and was taken to Pretoria. The story goes that it was Louis Botha who captured him, but there is reason to believe that this is not accurate. Churchill says that Louis Botha introduced himself as his captor three years later, but Botha never corroborated Churchill's story, and he was always silent when it was mentioned. Churchill was opportunist, and was not averse to an embellishment or two to a good tale. However, his escape and subsequent friendship with Louis Botha are a matter of public record. He arrived in Lourenco Marques and sailed back to Durban, went to see Sir Redvers Buller in order to get attached to one of the regiments under his command. He was to continue his reporting for the *Morning Post*, being attached to the South African Light Horse, unpaid. He saw action at Spion Kop, and was at the Relief of Ladysmith. After Ladysmith he returned to Cape Town (and stayed at the Mount Nelson) to await permission to join Lord Roberts' staff as a War Correspondent, who had come with Lord Kitchener to South Africa to replace Sir Redvers Buller. Lord Roberts was an old family friend, and Churchill was bewildered when he heard nothing for more than a week. He discovered that he was unwelcome because Lord Kitchener disliked him and was offended by the comments in *The River War*,

furthermore Lord Roberts himself resented Churchill's criticism of the lack of religious care taken of the Army. He explained the incident:

"In a letter to the *Morning Post* written from Natal, I had criticized severely the inadequacy of a sermon preached to the troops on the eve of battle by a Church of England Army Chaplain. The Commander in Chief regarded this as a very unjust reflection on the spiritual ministrations of these devoted officials. He was, my friends said, 'extremely stiff.' They were trying their best to soften him and believed that in a few days they would succeed. Meanwhile there was nothing for it but to wait.

"I now recalled very clearly the incident of the Army Chaplain's sermon and what I had written about it. It was the Sunday between Spion Kop and Vaal Krantz. The men of a whole brigade, expecting to be seriously engaged on the next day or the day after, had gathered for Service in a little grassy valley near the Tugela and just out of gunshot of the enemy's lines. At this moment when all hearts, even the most indifferent, were especially apt to receive the consolations of religion, and when a fine appeal might have carried its message to deep and permanent results, we had been treated to a ridiculous discourse on the peculiar and unconvincing tactics by which the Israelites

were said to have procured the downfall of the walls of Jericho. My comment, caustic perhaps, but surely not undeserved, had been: 'As I listened to these foolish sentences I thought of the gallant and venerable figure of Father Brindle in the Omdurman campaign, and wondered whether Rome would again seize the opportunity which Canterbury disdained.' These strictures had, it appeared, caused commotion in the Established Church. Great indignation had been expressed, and following thereupon had been a veritable crusade. Several of the most eloquent divines, vacating their pulpits, had volunteered for the Front and were at this moment swiftly journeying to South Africa to bring a needed reinforcement to the well-meant exertions of the Army Chaplains Corps. (Father Brindle was a well-known and honoured figure in the British Army in this period; and afterwards Bishop of Nottingham.). [36]

His friends eventually succeeded in getting Lord Roberts to allow Churchill to join the staff, but Lord Roberts did not acknowledge Churchill's presence or greet him other than as a stranger.

"I was by now a fairly experienced young officer and I could often feel danger impending from this quarter or from that, as you might feel a light breeze on your cheek or neck. When one rode for instance within rifle shot of some hill or watercourse

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[36] P.347. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

about which we did not know enough, I used to feel a draughty sensation. On this occasion as I looked back over my shoulder from time to time at Hussar Hill or surveyed the large brown masses of our rearmost squadrons riding so placidly home across the rolling veldt, I remarked to my companion, 'We are much too close to those fellows'. [and his brother Jack gets shot].

Churchill is not afraid of having independent ideas, indeed raising points of view which had no current attraction. His indiscriminate reading years in the Indian Army and his efforts to think for himself gave him broader, freer viewpoint. After the relief of Ladysmith the following article appeared in the Morning Post, which was not popular in England, nor in Natal:

"In spite of the feelings of the loyal colonists who have fought so gallantly for the Empire, I earnestly hope and urge that a generous and forgiving policy be followed. If the military operations are prosecuted furiously and tirelessly there will be neither necessity nor excuse for giving rebels who surrender a 'lesson'. The wise and right course is to beat down all who resist, even to the last man, but not to withhold forgiveness and even friendship from any who wish to surrender. The Dutch farmers who have joined the enemy are only traitors in the legal sense. That they obeyed the natural instinct of their blood to

join the men of their own race, though no justification, is an excuse. Certainly their conduct is morally less reprehensible than that of Englishmen who are regular burghers of the Republics, and who are fighting as fiercely as proper belligerents against their own countrymen. .....yet even these Englishmen would deserve some tolerance were they not legally protected by their citizenship. The Dutch traitor is less black than the renegade British-born burgher, but both are the results of our own mistakes and crimes in Africa in former years. On purely practical grounds it is most important to differentiate between rebels who want to surrender and rebels who are caught fighting. Every influence should be brought to bear to weaken the enemy and make him submit. On the one hand are mighty armies advancing irresistibly, slaying and smiting with all the fearful engines of war; on the other, the quiet farm with wife and children safe under the protection of a government as merciful as it is strong. The policy which will hold these two pictures ever before the eyes of the republican soldiers is truly 'thorough,' and therein lies the shortest road to 'peace with honour.'" [37]

He held these ideas to the end of his life:

"I have always urged fighting wars and other contentions with

[37] P.344. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

might and main till overwhelming victory, and then offering the hand of friendship to the vanquished. ... *'Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos,'* which translates 'spare the conquered and war down the proud'. ...Never more apt than in South Africa. Wherever we departed from it, we suffered; wherever we followed it, we triumphed. .....And not only in South Africa. I thought we ought to have conquered the Irish and then given them Home Rule: that we ought to have starved out the Germans, and then revictualled their country; and that after smashing the General Strike, we should have met the grievances of the miners. I always get into trouble because so few people take this line. I was once asked to devise an inscription for a monument in France. I wrote: "In war, Resolution. In defeat, Defiance. In victory, Magnanimity. In peace, Goodwill." The inscription was not accepted. It is all the fault of the human brain being made in two lobes, only one of which does any thinking, so that we are all right-handed or left-handed; whereas if we were properly constructed we should use our right and left hands with equal force and skill according to circumstances. As it is, those who can win a war well can rarely make a good peace, and those who could make a good peace would never have won the war. It would perhaps be pressing the argument too far to suggest that I could do both." [38]

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[38] P.346. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

The above was written years after the end of the Boer War, indeed after the First World War. Churchill returned to England, and again contested the Oldham seat for the Conservatives in the Khaki election. He was elected to Parliament. However, he maintained his own independence of thought, and often found himself at variance with Conservative policy. "I found myself differing from both parties in various ways, and I was so untutored as to suppose that all I had to do was to think out what was right and express it fearlessly. I thought that loyalty in this outweighed all other loyalties. I did not understand the importance of party discipline and unity, and the sacrifices of opinion which may lawfully be made in their cause." [39]

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[39] P.382. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

PART II

Winston Churchill entered the House of Commons as Conservative Member for Oldham in 1901. The House of Commons played a very important part in his life. It was the clearing house for justice, action, restraint, for the airing the cause of an individual man to the huge collective decisions like going to war. Within its mechanisms and behaviour codes, any and every conceivable matter could be dealt with.

"I need not recount," he wrote of his maiden speech, "the pains I had taken to prepare, nor the efforts I had made to hide the work of preparation.

"Towards nine o'clock the House began to fill. Mr. Lloyd George... announced forthwith that he did not intend to move his amendment ...Encouraged by the cheers of the "Celtic fringes" he soon became animated and even violent. I constructed in succession sentence after sentence to hook on with after he should sit down. Each of these poor couplings became in turn obsolete. A sense of alarm and even despair crept across me. I repressed it with an inward gasp."

On the bench beside him sat a friendly and experienced Parliamentarian, Mr. Gibson Bowles, who must have been aware of Churchill's distress, for he threw him a life-line.

"He whispered: "You might say 'Instead of making his violent speech without moving his moderate amendment, he had better have moved his moderate amendment without making his violent speech.'" Manna in the Wilderness was not more welcome! It fell only just in time... I was up before I knew it, and reciting Tommy Bowles's rescuing sentence. It won a general cheer. Courage returned. I got through all right."[1]

Churchill always prepared thoroughly for his encounters in the House. The arrows of his swift retorts which sped like lightning to their mark owed their perfection to precognition. By some sixth sense he was able to foresee the bull's-eye before it was presented. It was largely to this gift of inspired and accurate prevision that he owed his mastery of debate. For in spite of his command of words, unequalled in its power, originality and range, he was never a ready speaker. He suffered from a very slight speech impediment, and a lisp, which he had to learn to overcome. The artist in him forbade slipshod spontaneity. He was too verbally fastidious to leave his words to chance. To him

[1] P.361. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930.

a speech must be, in substance and in form, a work of art. As such it demanded hours of time and toil to fashion.[2]

He plunged with his usual enthusiasm into his political career. "In those days, and indeed for many years, I was unable to say anything (except a sentence in rejoinder) that I had not written out and committed to memory beforehand. .. I had to try to foresee the situation and to have a number of variants ready to meet its possibilities. I therefore came with a quiverful of arrows of different patterns and sizes, some of which I hoped would hit the target."[3]

The Commons was the pivot place where matters political were directed or could be changed. Over the years Churchill understood and used its mechanisms most effectively, for example for the Boers, India, Amritsar, the Wars, the rise of communism. It was the source of the severest criticism levelled against him, along with the Press. Even so, he served it with love and understanding and acceptance of its powers. In it he used his gifts to the full. He could clarify incidents and causes with which he identified. So often he was able to re-rail issues which had become emotionally tangled and violent, by returning to

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[2] P.81. Violet Bonham Carter. 1965.

[3] P.360. My Early Life - A Roving Commission. 1930

basic premises and values. Time and again he demonstrated that he could see situations in the broader context, and in so doing fit them into the pattern of destiny fitly and comfortably.

The House of Commons was often his vehicle of prophecy. His speeches contain his thoughts, energies, ideas, destinies. No statesman has felt deeper reverence for the House of Commons. It was his spiritual home. His speeches were his intensely personal expression, his carefully constructed ammunition for any cause for which he was fighting, for drawing attention to future problems. For example, in 1901 when John Broderick devised a scheme to reform and upgrade the army, Churchill said that it was expensive and not the right thing at all. Broderick suggested three Army Corps should be kept ready for expeditionary purposes. Churchill said they should be reduced to two: "One is quite enough to fight savages and three are not enough to begin to fight Europeans."

In a prophetic message he went on to foreshadow the scale and magnitude of total wars to come:

"I have frequently been astonished since I have been in this House to hear with what composure and how glibly Members, and even Ministers, talk of a European war. I will not expatiate on the horrors of war, but there has been a great change which the

House should not omit to notice. In former days, when wars arose from individual causes, from the policy of a Minister or the passion of a King, when they were fought by small regular armies of professional soldiers, and when their course was retarded by the difficulties of communication and supply, and often suspended by the winter season, it was possible to limit the liabilities of the combatants. But now, when mighty populations are impelled on each other, each individual severally embittered and inflamed - when the resources of science and civilization sweep away everything that might mitigate their fury, a European war can only end in the ruin of the vanquished and the scarcely less fatal commercial dislocation and exhaustion of the conquerors. Democracy is more vindictive than Cabinets. The wars of peoples will be more terrible than those of kings."[4] How right he was.

In 1906, he touched on South Africa's Achilles' heel in a motion demanding recognition of Britain's Imperial responsibility towards the native races:

"If there be added the perceptible hardening against the native which is characteristic of the Milner regime, while I say there is no reason for immediate apprehension, I am bound to add that this aspect of South African affairs contains elements which

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[4] Hansard, 13th May, 1901.

require stern and patient attention. In the presence of such an issue all the harsh discordance which divide the European Population in South Africa vanish. Farmer and Capitalist, Randlord and miner, and Boer, Briton and Afrikaaner forget their bitter feuds and are all united in the presence of what they regard as the greatest peril which they will ever have to face. Even during the worst stresses of the war it was regarded as a nameless crime on either side to set the black man on his fellow foe. I would ask the House to remember for one moment the figures of the South African census ... In the United States the proportion of white men to natives is 8 to 1 and even there I believe there is something sometimes approaching to racial difficulties but in South Africa the proportion is one white man to five natives. I ask the House to remember the gulf which separates the African negro from the immemorial civilisation of India and China. The House must remember these things in order to appreciate how the colonists feel towards that ever swelling sea of dark humanity upon which they with all they hate and all they love float somewhat uneasily... This black peril, as it is called in the current discussion of the day, is surely as grim a problem as any mind could be forced to face. Yet it is the one bond of union between the European races who live in the country the one possibility of making them forget the bitter and senseless feuds that have so long prevailed; and which may have

led the people of South Africa to look with a real feeling of self-restraint and comfort to the armed forces of the British Crown.

.....

We will endeavour as far as we can to advance the principle of equal rights of civilised men irrespective of colour. We will encourage as far as may be in our power a careful, patient discrimination between the different classes of coloured men. We will not - at least I will pledge myself - hesitate to speak out when necessary if any plain case of cruelty or exploitation of the native for the sordid profit of the white man can be proved. Above all, we will labour to secure as far as we can a proper status for our Indian fellow subjects, and to preserve those large reservations of good, well-watered land where the African aboriginal, for whom civilisation has no chance, may dwell secluded and at peace."[5]

Churchill's ideas on colonialism were coloured by the Victorian ethic. It must be remembered that the European colonists at that time were convinced that their way of life, their religion, their technologies, were of fundamental benefit to mankind, red, brown, black or yellow. It was inconceivable, to them, that the "aboriginals" would not instantly perceive this and be deeply

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[5] P.163. Randolph S. Churchill. Young Statesman. Vol.1.

grateful for what the colonists had to offer, and do their best to emulate it. Even so, Churchill was far ahead in his perceptions of the necessity to extend protection and basic human rights to these British subjects. Unfortunately, he did not see this as an area of needing immediate attention, and was concerned only when some outburst occured.

In later years, he would say "The House of Commons is a jealous mistress: You must give her the cream of your thought." [6] It was a fitting setting for his oratory - and he quickly developed into an orator, using his acting ability, his superb command of English, his convictions, and, of course his debating skills, with great panache. His sins, mistakes and failures were publicly debated in the Commons and the Press. He believed in the human race, that qualities of honour, courage, intelligence and the power of choice were present in all people. He was flagrantly partisan towards the English, but this fundamental bias enabled him to acknowledge confidently the good qualities in other peoples, always knowing, of course, that the British were best.

Churchill crossed the Floor to the Liberal benches in 1903, and so came into close contact with the Liberal leaders Campbell-

[6] P.100. Winston S. Churchill: Youth. R.S. Churchill.1967.

Bannerman, Asquith, Lloyd George, Lord Grey, etc. He met Violet, Asquith's daughter, at a dinner party in 1906, and she became a friend for life. She gave her impressions of him and his character in her book, *Winston Churchill as I Knew Him* . Churchill said to her -after a torrent of magnificent language descrying the shortness of life for what he wished to achieve: "We are all worms. But I do believe that I am a glow-worm." [7]

Violet Bonham Carter goes on to say:
"First and foremost he was incalculable. He ran true to no form. There lurked in every thought and word the ambush of the unexpected. I felt also that the impact of life, ideas and even words upon his mind was not only vivid and immediate but DIRECT. Between him and them there was no shock absorber of vicarious thought or precedent gleaned either from books or other minds. His relationship with all experience was first hand.

.....In certain fields of thought there was to them (her scholastic father and friends) nothing new under the sun. But to Winston Churchill everything under the sun was new - seen and appraised as on the first day of creation. His approach to life was full of ardour and surprise. Even the eternal verities appeared to him to be an exciting personal discovery. (He often

[7] P.16. Violet Bonham Carter. 1965.

seemed annoyed to find that some of them had occurred to other people long ago.... His mind had found its own way everywhere.

Nothing to him was trite - he was intellectually quite uninhibited and unselfconscious. The whole world of thought was virgin soil. .....There was nothing false, inflated, artificial in his eloquence. It was his natural idiom. His world was built and fashioned in heroic lines. He spoke its language." [8]

It would appear that Churchill's "genius", in the sense of a different and unusual being, was patently obvious to those who met him for the first time. He was incapable of giving a wrong impression of himself, though he was as ardently disliked as liked on first acquaintance. Violet Bonham Carter sensed his lack of persiflage in the face of the world. He could not be commonplace.

"...I felt that, though armed to the teeth for life's encounter, he was also strangely vulnerable, that he would need protection from, interpretation to, a humdrum world which would not easily apprehend or understand his genius. And in this last fear I was right." [9]

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[8] P.17. Violet Bonham Carter. 1965.

[9] P.18. Violet Bonham Carter. 1965.

His mind and concentration was such that he would pursue an idea or problem to the exclusion of all else - even if he was in a situation where it was not appropriate to do so. Two examples of this: when sitting next to Lady Horner, whose "conversational resources were unlimited, her human understanding flexible and deep", he said not a word to her. When she said "Do tell me- what on earth *are* you thinking about?" He replied "I am thinking of a diagram", and relapsed into complete absorbtion again. Later, in Scotland, the young lady seated next to him was so outraged by his neglect that she snatched up her plate and knife and fork and finished her luncheon standing at the sideboard. He did not even notice her flight till at the very end of luncheon. When he saw her empty chair, he asked his hostess innocently: "What happened to that jolly little trout?" He was full of compunction when he understood and explained the vital matter which had filled his mind to the exclusion of all else. [10]

His unpredictability would confuse people, confusion is an unpopular state of mind. More often than not it is mistaken for unreliability. However, when the chips were down the public responded to the truth, rather than platitudes which "lulled" them. Unpredictability need not necessarily be confused with

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[10] P.20. Violet Bonham Carter. 1965.

original leadership.

He spoke in the Commons nine times in the first eleven months, and some fifty other speeches in towns and country. He met Liberal philosopher and free-thinker John Morley, who had a strong influence on his ideas about poverty. He was at variance with the trading policy of the Conservatives. He wrote to Lord Hugh Cecil on 24th October:

"I understand your plan vy clearly; and it is not mine. I do not want to be enrolled in a narrow sect of latter day Peelites austerely unbending in economics, more Tory than the Tories in other things.....
I do not object to fighting against heavy odds. I do object to being compelled to choose bad ground to fight on. Much may be done by even a few men whose position is clear and logical. But to proceed making perfivid protestations of loyalty to the 'party' & yet to trample on the dearest aspirations of the party & thwart its most popular champions is to court utter ruin.....
I hate the Tory party, their men, their words & their methods. If feel no sort of sympathy with them - except my own people at Oldham.....Already I have freely against my inclination taken a backward step in subscribing to A. Balfour's policy. .... I feel very uncomfortable about what I have said, & am not sure even of

its honesty. To go on like this wavering between opposite courses, feigning friendship to a party where no friendship exists, & loyalty to leaders whose downfall is desired, sickens me. Moreover from a tactical point of view it is the surest road to destruction.....The Tory party would show me no mercy, & I do not expect it or desire it. But upon the other hand I want to be free to defend myself - and I mean to be. It is therefore my intention that before Parliament meets my separation from the Tory party and the Government shall be complete & irrevocable: & during the next session I propose to act consistently with the Liberal party. This will no doubt necessitate re-election which I shall not hesitate to face with all its chances." [11]

The Government under Balfour was defeated in Parliament, and he resigned in December, 1905. The King asked Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman to form a Liberal Government, and called for a General Election in early 1906. Churchill stood for (and won) the seat of North West Manchester. He had been offered the post of Under-Secretary to the Colonial Office, which he accepted and chose as his personal private secretary Edward Marsh, who was to work for him in this capacity for over thirty years until he retired. Eddie Marsh followed him to the Board of Trade, the Home Office, The Admiralty, the Duchy of Lancaster, the Ministry of Munitions,

[11] P.70. Vol. II. Young Statesman: R.S. Churchill.

the War Office, back to his original Colonial Office and the Treasury. They were, of course, life-long friends. "There was an absolute quality in his loyalty, known only to those safe within its walls. Their battle was his own. He would concede no inch of ground, no smallest point against them. In a friend he would defend the indefensible, explain away the inexplicable, even forgive the unforgivable." [12]

Eddie Marsh had a high-pitched voice (he complained of being called "madam" on the telephone), except when he called a dog, in a deep bass. He was tall and thin. Their friendship was incongruous. One morning he woke up with no voice at all and when he presented himself to Winston said in a whisper: "I'm afraid I shan't be much use today, as I've lost my voice." "What," thundered Winston, "is that resonant organ extinct?"[13]

On another occasion Winston had attended a performance of *Anthony & Cleopatra* which had excited and impressed him, but said that Tree (actor) had made one mistake. He had said: "Unarm Eros, the long day's task is done," which didn't scan. The line should of course begin "Eros unarm". This gave Eddie Marsh an opportunity for a short discourse on the beauty which may lie in departing

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[12] P.146. Violet Bonham Carter. 1965.

[13] P.151. Violet Bonham Carter. 1965.

from the norm of a metre. He supported his thesis with Palgrave's note in the Golden Treasury on Shelley's line "And wild roses and ivy serpentine", arguing that a good poet might have written "And roses wild", but a great poet to recognise the beauty in occasional deviation. "Yes," said Winston, "and I suppose it would have taken the greatest poet of all to write 'And wild roses and serpentine ivy'."

Churchill also formed a lifelong friendship with F.E. Smith, later Lord Birkenhead. F.E. Smith was a Conservative, a brilliant lawyer, he later became Lord Chancellor of England.

"Our friendship was perfect. It was one of my most precious possessions. He had all the canine virtues in a remarkable degree - courage, fidelity, vigilance, love of the chase." ... "For all purposes of discussion, argument, exposition, appeal or altercation, F.E. had a complete armoury. The bludgeon for the platform; the rapier for a personal dispute; the entangling net and unexpected trident for the Courts of Law; and a jug of clear spring water for an anxious perplexed conclave." And he adds in a revealing sentence, "he was always great fun." I think that there was no friend in his life with whom he had greater fun, and of the kind he loved the best.[14]

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[14] P.174. Great Contemporaries. 1937.

There were no women in his innermost circle of friends. His approach to women was essentially romantic. He had a lively susceptibility to beauty, glamour, radiance and those who possessed these qualities were not subjected to analysis. Their possession of all the cardinal virtues was assumed as a matter of course. There were two kinds of women, virginal snowdrops and mature. Of "mature" company at a birthday dinner given for him- women thoroughly versed in the life of the social jungle - he said:

"This is the sort of company I should like to find in heaven." Afterwards, when he had sat down he enlarged:
"Yes - this is the sort of company I should like to find in heaven." Then as his eye roved round the table, resting on each questionable candidate in turn - "Stained perhaps - stained but *positive.* Not those flaccid sea-anemones of virtue who can hardly wobble an antenna in the waters of negativity - " And he murmured once again, "stained perhaps..." [15]

At this time Asquith was Prime Minister, and he saw Churchill as a brilliant young man. He offered Churchill the post of Under Secretary for the Colonies. Lord Elgin was Colonial Secretary.

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[15] P.149. Violet Bonham Carter. 1965.

The first and most important work was the settling of South Africa after the Boer War. Lord Elgin left most of the work to Churchill, who worked closely with the South Africans, particularly Jan Smuts and Louis Botha.[16]

In 1908, he left the Colonial Office and moved to the Board of Trade, which carried Cabinet status. He was 33 years old. He met Clementine Hozier, who he married this same year. In 1909 they had their first child, Diana. In February, 1910, Churchill was promoted again to the Home Office. He had an immense capacity for work, and in all three posts he introduced viable working systems, social and economic reforms (shop working hours and conditions), pensions, conditions of employment, unemployment (very high at this time), insurance - he was obviously a dynamo of irresistible energy, and of course, he had Cabinet backing.

In 1906, the House of Commons had a Liberal majority, the House of Lords a Conservative majority. This caused a head-on collision. Liberal legislation passed through the Commons only

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[16] Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, first Liberal Prime Minister in 1906, had lifted the great penalties imposed on South Africa at the end of the Boer War. It was an act of great mercy, and later his example guided Louis Botha and Jan Smuts to try with all their might to lighten the considerable load placed on Germany at the Treaty of Versailles ending World War I. It is a matter of history that the heavy penalties placed on Germany contributed to the state of a nation where a Hitler could grow.

to be tossed out by the Lords. Normally to redress a situation like this the King would create more peers of the lower House party, but as King George V pointed out, it would make him look silly to suddenly create 450 new lords. The dispute was brought to a head by the "People's Budget" which Lloyd George introduced in 1909, which increased taxation on the "better-off" sections of the community. It took 70 parliamentary days and 554 divisions to get it through the Commons. The House of Lords threw it out. A general election was fought over the Veto power of the House of Lords. Lloyd George and Churchill went into battle, although Churchill caught much more abuse, being considered a traitor to his class. Dukes came under particular fire, and the King was so incensed by the speeches against the aristocracy that his secretary, Lord Knollys, wrote to the Times, a grave departure from precedent. Churchill published a "pamphlet", which is actually a book, called *The People's Rights*, in which he compiled his speeches made in December 1909. He was a formidable opponent on the platform. He argues strongly for government of the people by the people under the headings of Rights, Budget, Trade, Land, Welfare and Choice.

The Liberals won the election, but their large overall majority was reduced to two, and subsequently they had to rely on the Irish vote to support them.

"Much of the weight of piloting the Parliament Bill through the Commons fell upon Churchill. He was often in charge of government business - particularly after dinner - and Asquith had devolved on him the task of writing the nightly letter to the King on that day's proceedings in the Commons." [17]

After the 1910 election, Churchill was appointed by Asquith to the Home Office. His duties included: the maintenance of Law and Order, the efficiency of the police service, control and administrations of Prisons and borstal institutions, the treatment of offenders, including juveniles, organization of Magistrates Courts, legislation on criminal justice, immigration control, capital punishment and advice to the Crown on mercy, and petitions, ceremonials and honours. He dealt with strikes, prison reform, women's suffrage, accidents in Mines, Shops Act and Early Closing, Aliens Bill, pensions and insurance. With Mrs. Everest, his nanny, in mind he said: "When I think of the fate of poor old women, so many of whom have no one to look after them and nothing to live on at the end of their lives, I am glad to have had a hand in all that structure of pensions and insurance which no other country can rival and which is especially a help to them."[18] Although he always advocated

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[17] P.344. Vol II: Young Statesman. Randolph S. Churchill.

[18] P. 26. My Early Life. 1930.

capital punishment, he studied every case thoroughly and carefully and reprieved the victim as often as possible. He was aware indeed of the gravity of sentencing a man to death. Though when excitement got the better of him, he was pretty ruthless. One day, as Home Secretary, he got the news that a terrorist who was, the police thought, responsible for murder and arson, was found and on the run. Churchill instantly went to the scene of the action. There was a chase through the streets of London, and finally the terrorist locked himself and his companion into a house in Sidney Street. The street was barricaded off, but the terrorist set fire to the house rather than be captured. Churchill had been in the thick of the chase, the going to ground, the barricading, and was delighted that the house was on fire. He restrained the fire-engines which arrived from starting to put the fire out until he was sure the terrorist would be in no state to answer back. They found the remains of one terrorist, but it was possible that the important one got away.

The hue and cry in the press and Government about this episode was enormous. The Government was extremely angry, and the press were highly critical of the interference in police, civil, traffic, and fire department duties. It was an incident which was never forgotton when Churchill's faults were paraded.
"NOW what have you been up to, Winston?" demanded Eddie Marsh

furiously, brandishing a newspaper the next morning. "Don't be vexed with me, Eddie, it was such fun!" replied Churchill.

During the second strike of Welsh coal miners, the legend of Tonypandy was born. Tonypandy was one of many small mining villages in the Rhondda Valley which suffered much more looting than most during the strike. The whole area was seething with unrest, and the local authorities appealed to the War Office for troops. On hearing of this, Churchill, who was horrified at the thought of troops firing on civilians, consulted the Secretary of State for War, Haldane, and they agreed instead to send Metropolitan police, but to hold some troops in reserve near by. The Chief Constable used locally available Police to prevent attacks upon the collieries, looting, and to control the whole district, and in fact did so before the London Police arrived. "This force of picked constables experienced in the handling of crowds was for every purpose better suited to the needs of the situation than an equivalent body of military. Infantry soldiers can if attacked or stoned only reply by fire from long-range rifles which often kills foolish sightseers unconnected with the riot, or innocent people at some distance from it." wrote Churchill in his contemporary report to the King. The troops and cavalry remained in Cardiff and never went to the Rhondda valley. "The insensate action of the rioters in wrecking shops in the town of Tonypandy, against which they had not the slightest cause

for animosity, when they had been foiled by their attacks upon the colliery, was not foreseen by anyone on the spot, and would not have been prevented by the presence of soldiers at the colliery itself... No need for the military is likely to occur." he said in the same report. [19]

The legend that has grown up round Tonypandy is that troops sent by Churchill were ordered to fire on the miners, killing several, who are now apocryphal martyrs of the coal strikes.

The industrial unrest continued in England, and Churchill continued with his policy of using Metropolitan Police, but keeping, with Haldane's permission and co-operation, troops in reserve.

During this time Churchill was also concerning himself vigorously in military and naval matters. In September 1911 Churchill was invited up to Scotland to stay with Asquith, and there offered the Admiralty. The Germans were arming insidiously and McKenna, who was First Lord immediately before Churchill, had been agitating for eight new super Dreadnoughts to be laid down. Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer, was very anti-dreadnaught. However, when Churchill went to the Admiralty, he

[19] P.374. Vol.II. Young Statesman. Randolph S. Churchill.

inherited a program for building up the English navy, which stood him in very good stead.

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

PART III

Churchill accepted the post of First Lord of the Admiralty in September, 1911. His rise in the Government since he had crossed the floor in 1903 was meteoric. His capacity for work, great energy and loyalty, and a fearless optimism which made him sure he could handle any crisis or situation, however hopeless or complex or dangerous it was, made him a valuable member of the Government. He always wound up in the forefront of the hottest actions, and very often he was assigned the lost causes. Herbert Henry Asquith became Prime Minister shortly after the Liberals came to power (Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman died) and was a powerful ally to Churchill's career. Churchill wrote of him:

"He was always very kind to me and thought well of my mental processes; was obviously moved to agreement by many of the State papers which I wrote. A carefully-marshalled argument, cleanly printed, read by him at leisure, often won his approval and thereafter commanded his decisive support. His orderly, disciplined mind delighted in reason and design. It was always worth while spending many hours to state a case in the most concise and effective manner for the eye of the Prime Minister.

In fact I believe I owed the repeated advancement to great offices which he accorded me, more to my secret writings on Government business than to any impressions produced by conversation or by speeches on the platform or in Parliament. One felt that the case was submitted to a high tribunal, and that repetition, verbiage, rhetoric, false argument, would be impassively but inexorably put aside."[1]

When Churchill went to the Admiralty, he instantly made his presence felt by asking for the First Sea Lord's - Sir Henry Wilson - resignation. Sir Henry had refused categorically to create a Naval War Staff, requested by the Cabinet. Churchill appointed, not without opposition - notably from the King himself, Lord Fisher as First Lord. It was not one of Churchill's best appointments.

The Admiralty was run on lines laid down half a century earlier, absolute authority and dependence being placed on the four Sea Lords. Tradition ruled, novelty and change were conspicuous by their absence. Churchill brought in far-reaching reforms. He had the definite ability to take a situation and shake it into shape. It is interesting to note, too, that when Churchill was plummeting out of office and favour, Sir Henry Wilson strongly

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[1] P.140. Great Contemporaries. 1937.

supported him, first by accepting the post of First Sea Lord after Fisher's departure, and in a letter sent directly to Asquith a few days later.

The technological advances made in naval communications and mobility rendered the direction of operations from an over-all view point not only possible, but essential. Churchill emphasized the importance of training young officers for great responsibility. In The World Crisis he says:

"I never ceased to labour at the formation of a true General Staff for the Navy.

"But such a task requires a generation. .....Young officers can be trained, but hereafter they have to rise step by step in the passage of time to positions of authority in the Service....They did not want a special class of officer profession to be more brainy than the rest. Sea-time should be the main qualification, and next to that technical aptitudes. Thus when I went to the Admiralty I found that there was no moment in the career and training of a naval officer, when he was obliged to read a single book about naval war, or pass even the most rudimentary examination in naval history. The Royal Navy had made no important contribution to Naval literature. The standard work on Sea Power was written by an American Admiral (Mahan). The best accounts of British sea fighting and naval strategy were

compiled by an English civilian (Sir Julian Corbett). 'The Silent Service' was not mute because it was absorbed in thought and study, but because it was weighted down by its daily routine and by its ever-complicating and diversifying technique. ..... at the outset of the conflict we had more captains of ships than captains of war."[2]

But he did enjoy his leadership:

"These were great days. From dawn to midnight, day after day, one's whole mind was absorbed by the fascinations and novelty of the problems which came crowding forward. And all the time there was a sense of power to act, to form , to organize: all the ablest officers in the Navy standing ready, loyal and eager, with argument, guidance, information; everyone feeling that a great sense of danger had passed very near us; that there was a breathing space before it would return; that we must be better prepared next time. ....." [3]

Churchill continually exhorted his Cabinet colleagues - and his subordinates - to firm decisions, decisive actions, broad policy, strong leadership. He was a great student of history. He could see the lessons to be learned and perceive patterns from history. With his comparative youth and tremendous vigour, he finally

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[2] P.74. The World Crisis. 1931.

[3] P.85. World Crisis, Abridged & Revised. 1932.

wore out his colleagues in the Cabinate, with his ambition, his compulsion to get plans moving, as well as his constant reminders that "they were under the eyes of history". Unfortunately history has proved him right. The indecision, delays, and bureaucratic bungling of the First World War make tragic reading.

In 1912, the German threat could not be ignored. They were building as many ships as their budget would allow. "The Naval situation disclosed by the new German Navy Law renders the formation of an additional Battle Squadron in Home waters necessary."[4] And so began Churchill's long battle for higher naval estimates. His speeches were "straight and so daringly truthful" (Lord Esher) or "brutally clear and frank" (Colonel Charles a Court Repington). "Bankruptcy stares me in the face", Lloyd George wrote to him in a Cabinet meeting. "Your only chance is to get 5,000,000 pounds next year and put the blame on me. Then you will be in clover again for the rest of the Parliament." replied Churchill, indicating his knowledge of his role as whipping horse for the Liberals. The estimates for 1913/14 were even higher. One item which was hotly disputed was a rise in pay for naval ratings. Three hundred thousand pounds was allocated and Churchill wanted 470,000 pounds. Lord Fisher had initiated this idea as vigorously as possible, and it sounds

[4] P.565. Vol II. Young Statesman. Randolph S. Churchill.

very overdue. Pay had remained almost unchanged for 60 years, and it was disgracefully low. "Having reached a compromise with Lloyd George at the Treasury the pay of older Able Seamen was raised by 3d. a day to 1s. 11d. and that of Petty Officers by 6d. a day to 3s. 2d. It was not as much as Churchill had hoped for but it was well received in the Fleet". [5] He also reviewed Naval justice, again overdue. His efforts were even noticed by the Navy League Annual, which was hostile to him.

A further expenditure came when Churchill wished to secure permanent oil supplies for his ships - new engines were oil, not coal, driven. And oil was not an English natural resource. He eventually signed a treaty which was very advantageous to Britain for many years. Churchill continued the main battle, which was to lay down sufficient Dreadnought ships to overtake German production and maintain naval supremacy. Help in resolving the problem came from an entirely unexpected quarter. This anecdote was told by Churchill to his son, and confirmed by Lady Megan Lloyd George years later.

"There were many Cabinets about the estimates, but the matter was not resolved and Asquith said Lloyd George and WSC must decide between themselves one way or the other. The point had been

[5] P.602. Vol.II. Young Statesman. Randolph S. Churchill.

reached where both were determined to resign rather than yield. Lloyd George said to WSC, 'Come to breakfast tomorrow at No 11 and we shall settle the matter.' WSC arrived next morning fully expecting that he would have to resign. Lloyd George greeted him and said, 'Oddly enough, my wife spoke to me last night about this Dreadnought business. She said, "You know, my dear, I never interfere in politics; but they say you are having an argument with that nice Mr. Churchill about building Dreadnoughts. Of course I don't understand these things, but I should have thought it would be better to have too many rather than too few." So I have decided to let you build them. Let's go into breakfast.'"[6]

And in the following exchange of notes in Cabinet Lloyd George asks to be congratulated on his GOOD press, and Churchill puts it into historical perspective:

Lloyd George: Phillip Snowden in his weekly letter today says that had there been any other Chancellor of the Exchequer your Naval Bill would have been cut by millions.
Churchill: There would also have been another First Lord of the Admiralty! And who can say - if such gaps were opened - that there would not have been another Government - which does not

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[6] P.681. Vol.II. Young Statesman. Randolph S. Churchill.

necessarily mean lower estimates. [7]

Churchill also struggled for an Air Department. He formed the Royal Naval Air Service, and tried flying himself, to the terror of his wife and friends. He pushed and persuaded money from the Exchequer. He wrote minutes about the safety and comfort of the pilots, ease of mechanical repair and maintenance, landing sites, torpedo possibilities, reconnaissance possibilities, insignia, etc. He also stoutly advocated research and development to be put into aeroplanes, rather than unwieldy airships, or zeppelins. Here he differed from Lord Fisher. Sir Henry Wilson suggested that a Cruiser be converted to allow a flight deck and carry an aircraft, the first practical proposal for an aircraft carrier. Churchill welcomed it.

A privilege of the First Lord of the Admiralty was the Admiralty Yacht *Enchantress.* In the years immediate preceding 1914, Churchill took regular trips in her and visited every naval outpost he could. Churchill recalls the months spent on the *Enchantress* as the most enjoyable of his life. Clementine, his secretaries, Eddie Marsh and Masterton-Smith, and the Asquiths were his favourite guests and they roamed where they wanted to.

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[7] P.686. Vol. II. Young Statesman. Randolph S. Churchill.

"The Admiralty yacht *Enchantress* was now to become largely my office, almost my home; and my work my sole occupation and amusement. In all, I spent eight months afloat in the three years before the war. I visited every dockyard, shipyard and naval establishment in the British Isles and in the Mediterranean and every important ship. I examined for myself every point of strategic consequence and every piece of Admiralty property. I got to know what everything looked like and where everything was, and how one thing fitted into another. In the end I could put my hand on anything that was wanted and knew thoroughly the current state of our naval affairs." [8]

These highly enjoyable jaunts could be criticised as being unnecessary. They were undoubtedly an expensive privilege. But from a practical point of view, given the need of radical reform and up-dating the Navy needed, Churchill really got to know and understand the huge organisation under his hand, and this knowledge in turn was translated into successful planning and training which culminated in the Royal Navy being ready for World War 1.

In the evenings they played bridge:

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[8] P. 89. World Crisis, Abridged & Revised. 1932.

"...My father (H.H. Asquith) was an eager and execrable player. Winston was even more dangerous, for he played a romantic game untrammelled by conventions, codes or rules. When playing in partnership they made a happy, carefree and catastrophic combination. But to cut with Winston was to both his Private Secretaries a severe ordeal. Masterton was a really good bridge player and treated the game with respect. Moreover, though the stakes were low he could not afford to lose overmuch. He used to sit in agony while Winston declared, doubled and redoubled with wild recklessness, watching his every discard and building reasonable conjectures on his play, only to be disillusioned and dumbfounded again and again. "But First Lord - you discarded the knave..." - "The cards I throw away are not worthy of observation or I should not discard them. It is the cards I play on which you should concentrate your attention."

Eddie...took his own performance very seriously. In bridge he tasted rapture, a rapture which was bitter-sweet when playing with Winston as his partner. I can still hear his shrill cry of pain when Winston, having led up to and sacrificed his king, declared: "Nothing is here for tears. The king cannot fall unworthily if he falls to the sword of the ace" - a dictum which left Eddie's tears over his fallen king undried. [9]

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[9] P. 265. Violet Bonham Carter, 1965.

They had great fun on the *Enchantress*, cruising slowly round the Mediterranean. Churchill thoroughly enjoyed life. And when he dwelt on his beloved Navy, he became incurably romantic:

"For consider these ships (1912 this is) so vast in themselves, yet so small, so easily lost to sight on the surface of the waters. Sufficient at the moment, we trusted, for their task, but yet only a score or so. They were all we had. On them, as we conceived, floated the might, majesty, dominion and power of the British Empire. All our long history built up century after century, all our great affairs in every part of the globe, all the means of livelihood and safety of our faithful, industrious active population depended upon them. Open the sea-cocks and let them sink beneath the surface, as another Fleet was one day to do in another British harbour far to the North, and in a few minutes - half an hour at the most - the whole outlook of the world would be changed. The British Empire would dissolve like a dream; each isolated community struggling forward by itself; the central power of union broken; mighty provinces, whole Empires in themselves, drifting hopelessly out of control, and falling prey to strangers; and Europe after one sudden convulsion passing into the iron grip and rule of the Teuton and of all that the Teutonic system meant. There would only be left

far off across the Atlantic unarmed, unready, and as yet uninstructed America, to maintain, single-handed, law and freedom among men.

Guard them well, admirals and captains, hardy tars and tall marines; guard them well and guide them true." [10]

Gathering momentum were the events which led to the First World War. In 1905, France and Germany vied with each other for influence in Morocco. Germany gave France to understand that she was prepared to go to War. France and her military machinery were quite unprepared, and her natural ally, Russia, was incapacitated. France was forced to back down, but not before she had negotiated an Agreement with Great Britain. Early 1906, a conference was called to solve the question of Morocco between France and Germany at Algeciras, and Great Britain appeared on the scene - apparently quite unchanged and unperturbed by her domestic convulsions (the Irish question) - to support France strongly. Sir Edward Grey had a further mandate to begin military conversations between the French and British military staffs, a step of great significance. Germany became aggressive, so much so that even her ally, Austria, "revealed limits beyond which she would not go." Thus Germany found herself isolated, and what she had gained by her threats of war evaporated by the

[10] P. 86. World Crisis. Abridged & Revised. 1932.

Council Board." [11] But the conference crystallized into the two factions - France and Great Britain vs. Germany and Austria.

Next, in 1908, Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, which were, at the time, provinces of the Turkish Empire. It was done in such a way as to affront both the Turks and the Russians. "The bitter animosity excited against Austria throughout Russia became a penultimate cause of the Great War". [12] Serbia was very angry about the Annexation, mobilised her army and threatened war on Austria. At this point Germany intervened and insisted that Russia herself advised Serbia to back down, without conference or compensation, or Austria would "declare war on Serbia with the full and complete support of Germany." [13] Russia collapsed, as France had done three years before, and they again closed their ranks and formed an alliance. Germany and Austria began to re-arm, heavily. The situation worsened, the states on western side of the Balkan Peninsula resisting demands and invasions from the Austrian Empire. One can see that the stresses and counter-stresses between the smaller Balkan States fomented by Austria would indeed become a powder-keg, to which the match of the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Charles

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[11] P.36. The World Crisis. 1932.

[12] P.38. The World Crisis. 1932.

[13] P.38. The World Crisis. 1932.

by a Serbian in Sarajevo (June 28, 1914) was set. One can also see the strategic importance of the Dardanelles, Gallipoli and Constantinople becoming of concern to England, France and Russia.

In 1909, it was Britain's turn to feel the German threat. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. McKenna, suddenly demanded that six Dreadnought battleships be constructed. The expansion of the German Fleet was causing anxiety. Churchill himself was sceptical as to the gravity of the situation, and he was "led to analyse minutely the character and composition of the British and German Navies, actual and prospective." [14] After much discussion and argument, the Exchequer authorized four new battleships, with the proviso that the last two would be re-considered later in the financial year. Churchill opposed the expenditure and felt that the Admiralty were unnecessarily gloomy. He said in The World Crisis:

"But although the Chancellor of the Exchequer and I were right in the narrow sense, we were absolutely wrong in relation to the deep tides of destiny. The greatest credit is due to the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. McKenna, for the resolute and courageous manner in which he fought his case and withstood his Party on this occasion. Little did I think, as this dispute

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[14] P.39. The World Crisis. 1932.

proceeded, that when the next Cabinet crisis about the Navy arose our roles would be reversed; and little did he think that the ships for which he contended so stoutly would eventually, when they arrived, be welcomed with open arms by me." [15]

In June, 1914, the Kaiser attended the Kiel regatta, sending a Naval squadron to mark the occasion. It was a glittering panoply of nations, spectacles, events and people. Churchill wrote:

"Would Europe thus marshalled, thus grouped, thus related, unite into one universal and glorious organism capable of receiving and enjoying in undreamed-of abundance the bounty which nature and science stood hand in hand to give? The old world in its sunset was fair to see.

"But there was a strange temper in the air. Unsatisfied by material prosperity the nations turned restlessly towards strife internal or external. National passions, unduly exalted in the decline of religion, burned beneath the surface of nearly every land with fierce, if shrouded fires. Almost one might think the world wished to suffer. Certainly men were everywhere eager to dare. On all sides the military preparations, precautions and counter precautions had reached their height. France had her

[15] P. 40. The World Crisis. 1932

Three Years military service; Russia her growing strategic Railways. The Ancient Empire of the Hapsburgs, newly smitten by the bombs of Sarajevo, was a prey to intolerable racial stresses and profound processes of decay. Italy faced Turkey: Turkey confronted Greece; Greece, Serbia and Roumania stood against Bulgaria. Britain was rent by faction and seemed almost negligible. America was three thousand miles away. Germany, her fifty million capital tax expended on munitions, her army increases completed, the Kiel Canal open for Dreadnought battleships that very month, looked fixedly upon the scene and her gaze became suddenly a glare." [16]

On July 28, he ordered the Home Fleet to steam into North Sea, so that it was at sea at war stations, and on July 29 it was ready. "We may now picture this great Fleet, with its flotillas and cruisers, steaming slowing out of Portland Harbour, squadron by squadron, scores of gigantic castles of steel wending their way across the misty, shining sea, like giants bowed in anxious thought. We may picture them again as darkness fell, eighteen miles of warships running at high speed and in absolute blackness through the narrow Straits, bearing with them into the broad waters of the North the safeguard of considerable affairs." [17]

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[16] P.107. World Crisis, Abridged & Revised. 1932.

[17] P.124. World Crisis, A & R. 1932

Churchill in full romantic vein. But he also gives a vivid and graphic idea of how enormous the Fleet was. The sheer volumes of materials and men used during the First World War are staggering. He later wrote to Lord Beaverbrook about his decision to send the fleet to battle stations:

"....The Prime Minister simply sat and looked at me and said no word. No doubt he felt himself bound by the morning's decision of the Cabinet. I certainly however sustained the impression that he would not put out a finger to stop me. I then walked back to the Admiralty across the Parade Ground and gave the order. Legal authority was not obtained until the Sunday. .. However all the Reserves came up immediately with hardly one hundred exceptions, in spite of there being no Royal Proclamation. ..The actual fact which is of interest for the future is that the mobilization was actually ordered against Cabinet decision and without legal authority." [18]

In spite of the unauthorized mobilisation of the Fleet, and his conviction that it would not be long before Germany declared war on France or invaded Belgium, he still hoped war would be averted. To Clementine he wrote:

I wondered whether those stupid Kings & Emperors cd not assemble

[18] P.25. M. Gilbert: The Challenge of War. Vol III.

together & revivify kingship by saving the nations from hell but we all drive on in a kind of dull cataleptic trance. As if it was somebody else's operation! (July 28, 1914.)[19]

But peace, for Churchill, meant maintaining acknowledged supremacy of England. In a letter to Lord Hugh Cecil (who advocated a neutral policy for Britain), Churchill wrote on 31st July:

My dear Linky,

Divergent views are certainly to be expected in the gt issues now afoot. But you will be wrong if you suppose that this country will be committed in any war in wh its profound national interests - among wh I include its honour - we are not clearly engaged. [20]

On August 1, Churchill received a Foreign Office box at the Admiralty. "I opened it and read 'Germany has declared war on Russia.' There was no more to be said. I walked across the Horse Guards Parade and entered 10, Downing Street, by the garden gate. I found the Prime Minister upstairs in his drawing-room: With him were Sir Edward Grey, Lord Haldane and Lord Crewe; there may have been other Ministers. I said that I intended instantly to

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[19] P. 10: M. Gilbert. The Challenge Of War. Vol.III.

[20] P.22. M. Gilbert: The Challenge of War, Vol III.

mobilize the Fleet notwithstanding the Cabinet decision, and that I would take full personal responsibility to the Cabinet next morning."

Britain's isolationist policy ended in the wake of these events. Asquith, Grey and Churchill realised that Britain would be in extreme danger and could not stand by should Germany attack France and/or invade Belgium. Churchill was now convinced that when War came, Asquith would find the burden of being both Prime Minister and Secretary of State for War too heavy. Asquith appointed Lord Kitchener. Kitchener, who had left for Egypt, was intercepted at Dover, and came back to London as Secretary of State for War.

Churchill could not help thoroughly enjoying being at the storm centre of "great and stirring" events which were evidently important and exciting history. He found the prospect of intense action very exhilarating. On July 28 (1914) he described his feelings in a letter to his wife: "I am interested, geared up & happy. Is it not horrible to be built like that? The preparations have a hideous fascination for me. I pray to God to forgive me for such fearful moods of levity."

Lloyd George described him to Margot Asquith: "Winston dashed

into the room, radiant, his face bright, his manner keen, one word pouring out on another how he was going to send telegrams to the Mediterranean, the North Sea, and God knows where. You could see he was a really happy man." [21]

and:

"Winston," Asquith wrote to Venetia Stanley, 'who has got on all his war paint, is longing for a sea fight in the early hours of the morning to result in the sinking of the Goeben.' (A German battleship in the Mediterranean poised to destroy French military transports). [22] Once it was dark, she disappeared. But as a result of the Cabinet decision not to attack Germany before a formal declaration of war, Churchill was powerless to act. There were restraints on all British politicians.

On August 2, Germany invaded Luxembourg, evidence of their intention to invade Belgium. Although the pledge with France was unwritten, Britain had written agreement to go to Belgium's aid should she be invaded. An ultimatum was sent to Germany to stop the invasion of Belgium within 24 hours. The ultimatum was ignored, and hostilities between Germany and Britain started on August 4, 1914. On August 12, Britain declared war on Austria-Hungary. The alliance system, not conflicting interests, brought

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[21] P.31. M. Gilbert: The Challenge of War, Vol.III.

[22] P.30. M. Gilbert. The Challenge of War, Vol III.

the two countries to war. Germany sent her armies through Luxembourg into Belgium and France. They rolled eastwards towards the coast and south-east across France.
The first set-back was not long in coming. Churchill wrote:

"At 7 o'clock the next morning (August 24) I was sitting up in bed in Admiralty House working at my boxes, when the door of my bedroom opened and Lord Kitchener appeared. These were the days before he took to uniform, and my recollection is that he had a bowler hat on his head, which he took off with the hand which also held a slip of paper. He paused in the doorway and I knew in a flash and before even he spoke that the event had gone wrong. Though his manner was quite calm, his face was different. I had the subconscious feeling that it was distorted and discoloured as if it had been punched with a fist. His eyes rolled more than ever. His voice, too, was hoarse. He looked gigantic. "Bad news," he said heavily, and laid the slip of paper on my bed. I read the telegram. It was from Sir John French.

"My troops have been engaged all day with the enemy on a line roughly east and west through Mons. The attack was renewed after dark, but we held our ground tenaciously. I have just received a message from G.O.C. 5th French Army and that his troops have been

driven back, that Namur has fallen, and that he is taking up a line from Maugeuge to Rocroi. I have therefore ordered a retirement to the line Valenciennes-Longueville-Maugeuge, which is being carried out now. I remember your precise instructions as to method and direction of retirement if necessity arises.
"I think that immediate attention should be directed to the defence of Havre." [23]

"Then came the days of retreat. We saw that the French armies of the right were holding their own, but all the centre and left was marching southwards towards Paris as fast as possible., while our own five divisions were for several days plainly in the very jaws of destruction. .....

"Personally, I was hopeful that the wave of invasion would spend its fury. and as I had indicated in my memorandum of three years before, I believed that unless the French forces had already been squandered by precipitate action on the frontiers an opportunity of striking the decisive blow would occur about the fortieth day. In order to encourage my colleagues I reprinted this memorandum and circulated it to the whole Cabinet on September 2, pointing out that I had never counted upon a victorious issue at the frontiers, had always expected that the French armies would be

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[23] P.159. World Crisis, Abridged & Revised. 1932.

driven into retreat by the twentieth day, but that in spite of this, there were good hopes of success. But I had no means of measuring the forces by which this result would be achieved, except by the most general processes." [24]

Churchill had written a memorandum entitled "Military Aspects of the Continental Problem." Basing his arguments upon the premise that Britain, France and Russia were in alliance, at war simultaneously with Germany and Austria, he had envisaged the decisive military operations being between France and Germany. He forecast that the initial German advance would have sufficient power to drive the French back, in twenty days, on Paris and the south. "All plans based upon the opposite assumption," he wrote, "ask too much of fortune". But he had argued that during each successive day of the German advance the German armies would be weakened by many causes: by the heavier losses always borne by attacking forces, by growing Russian pressure "from the thirtieth day", by the arrival of the British Expeditionary Force and by the lengthening German lines of communication. His memorandum had continued:

By the fortieth day Germany should be extended at full strain both internally and on her war fronts, and this strain will

[24] P.160. World Crisis, Abridged & Revised. 1932

become daily more severe and ultimately overwhelming, unless it is relieved by decisive victories in France. If the French army has not been squandered by precipitate desperate action, the balance of forces should be favourable after the fortieth day, and will improve steadily as time passes. For the German armies will be confronted with a situation which combines an ever-growing need for a successful offensive with a battle-front which tends continually towards numerical equality. Opportunities for the decisive trial of strength may then occur.

Such a policy demands heavy and hard sacrifices from France, who must, with great constancy, expose herself to invasion, to having her provinces occupied by the enemy, and to the investment of Paris, and whose armies may be committed to retrograde or defensive operations. Whether her rulers could contemplate or her soldiers endure this trial may depend upon the military support which Great Britain can give." [25]

Churchill was congratulated on all sides for his powers of prophecy and military acumen. The re-circulation of this memorandum gave great comfort to his colleagues who were dismayed by the speed and ferocity of the German advance.

Because of the retreat of the allies Britain and France, the

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[25] Pp.63/64. M.Gilbert. The Challenge of War. Vol.III.1971.

Channel ports were in grave danger. The German armies were rolling south and east through the north of France and heading for the coast in a broad band. The pivot and stopping point came at Antwerp. The Emperor ordered the taking of Antwerp, and it was besieged. The British decided that Antwerp was worth trying to defend, but it was a forlorn hope. Holland maintained a strict neutrality, and insisted that no military forces should pass into the River Scheldt, which emptied into the North Sea through Dutch territory. This precluded the Navy from supplying and protecting Antwerp, which angered Churchill though he still contrived to send arms and ammunition to them. The Belgian Government was thinking of moving to Ostend, thus giving up Antwerp to the Germans. The War Cabinet considered that it was necessary to send as much help as possible, and this help included sending someone to stiffen the Belgians.

"In these circumstances it was a natural decision that someone in authority who knew the general situation should travel swiftly into the city and there ascertain what could be done on either side. As I was already due at Dunkirk the next morning, the task was confided to me: Lord Kitchener expressed a decided wish that I should go; the First Sea Lord consented to accept sole responsibility in my absence. It was then about half-past one

in the morning." [26]

And on October 3, Churchill went to Antwerp, on just such a mission as he relished. He stiffened their resolve, made a tour of all their defensive posts and outposts and sent orders for more guns, ammunition, fuses, clothing and twelve field telephone sets. And, of course, many more troops to defend the city.

Finally, he offered to resign from the Admiralty and take command of the forces assigned to Antwerp in conjunction with the Belgian Army. Asquith refused his resignation very definitely, with a strong request to be informed when he meant to return, but Churchill went to a Belgian Cabinet meeting and on to inspect the Royal Naval Division which was holding the front line trenches. The Royal Naval Division (newly formed and inexperienced) was the only "foreign" help in Belgium at the time. The British Naval Brigades were slow off the mark, and the French ones delayed.
An eye-witness who saw Churchill at this time:

"I was in the battle line near Lierre, and in the midst of a group of officers stood a man. He was still young, and was enveloped in a cloak, and on his head wore a yachtsman's cap. He was tranquilly smoking a large cigar and looking at the progress

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[26] P.204. World Crisis, Abridged & Revised. 1932.

of the battle under a rain of shrapnel, which I can only call fearful. It was Mr. Churchill, who had come to view the situation himself. It must be confessed that it is not easy to find in the whole of Europe a Minister who would be capable of smoking peacefully under that shellfire. He smiled and looked quite satisfied." [27]

However, the Belgians were tired, dispirited, and no longer believed they could save the city, in spite of Churchill's "ironing and starching" (Asquith to Venetia Stanley), and Churchill returned to England on October 6. Antwerp surrendered to the Germans on October 10. Her fall had been delayed a week, which prevented the German forces linking up in France and gave the English and the French forces time to come round towards the north. The King of the Belgians said, in 1918:
"You are wrong in considering the RND (Royal Naval Division) as a forlorn hope. In my opinion it rendered great service to us and those who deprecate it simply do not understand the history of the War in its early days. Only one man of all your people had the prevision of what the loss of Antwerp would entail and that man was Mr. Churchill...Delaying an enemy is often of far greater service than the defeat of the enemy, and in the case of Antwerp the delay the RND caused to the enemy was of inestimable

[27] P.115. M. Gilbert. The Challenge of War, Vol.111.1971

service to us. These 3 days allowed the French and British Armies to move NW. Otherwise our whole army might have been captured and the Northern French Ports secured by the enemy. Moreover, the advent of the RND inspired our troops and owing to your arrival, and holding out for three days, great quantities of supplies were enabled to be destroyed. You kept a large army employed, and I repeat the RND rendered a service we shall never forget." [28]

Churchill was pretty savagely mauled by the Press for this episode. After the fall of Antwerp the opposing armies dug in along their fronts, and trench warfare was entrenched. His friend, Valentine Fleming, wrote to him from the Front in November, 1914:

"First and most impressive the absolutely indescribable ravages of modern artillery fire, not only upon all men, animals and buildings within its zone, but upon the very face of nature itself. Imagine a broad belt, ten miles or so in width, stretching from the Channel to the German frontier near Basle, which is positively littered with the bodies of men and scarified with their rude graves; in which farms, villages, and cottages are shapeless heaps of blackened masonry; in which fields, roads and trees are pitted and torn and twisted by shells and

[28] P. 125. M. Gilbert. Challenge of War, Vol.III. 1971.

disfigured by dead horses, cattle, sheep and goats, scattered in every attitude of repulsive distortion and dismemberment. Day and night in this area are made hideous by the incessant crash and whistle and roar of evry sort of projectile, by sinister columns of smoke and flame, by the cries of wounded men, by the piteous calls of animals of all sorts, abandoned, starved, perhaps wounded. Along this terrain of death stretch more or less parallel to each other lines of trenches, some 200 some 1,000 yards apart, hardly visible except to the aeroplanes which continually hover over them, menacing and uncanny harbingers of fresh showers of destruction. In these trenches crouch lines of men, in brown or grey or blue, coated with mud, unshaven, hollow-eyed with the continual strain unable to reply to the everlasting run of shells hurled at them from 3, 4, 5 or more miles away and positively welcoming an infantry attack from one side or the other as a chance of meeting and matching themselves against *human* assailants and not against invisible, irresistible machines, the outcome of an ingenuity which even you and I would be in agreement in considering unproductive from every point of view..." [29]

This sort of warfare continued for four years.

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[29] P.227. M.Gilbert. The Challenge of War. Vol.III. 1971.

"All the wars of the world could show nothing to compare with the continuous front which had now been established. Ramparts more than 350 miles long, ceaselessly guarded by millions of men, sustained by thousands of cannon, stretched from the Swiss frontier to the North Sea. The Germans had tried in October and November to break through while these lines were still weak and thin. They had failed with heavy losses. The French and British Headquarters had still to be instructed in the defensive power of barbed wire and entrenched machine guns." [30]

"It is a tale of the torture, mutilation or extinction of millions of men, and of the sacrifice of all that was best and noblest in an entire generation. The crippled, broken world in which we dwell today is the inheritor of these awful events. Yet all the time there were ways open by which this slaughter could have been avoided and the period of torment curtailed. There were regions where flanks could have been turned; there were devices by which fronts could have been pierced. And these could have been discovered and made mercifully effective, not by any departure from the principles of military art, but simply by the true comprehension of those principles and their application to the actual facts." [31]

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[30] P.296. M. Gilbert. The Challenge of War. Vol.III.1971.

[31] P.297. M. Gilbert. The Challenge of War. Vol.III. 1971

It became a war of exhaustion and futility. The battle-plans, strategies, diplomacies, military styles, generals, admirals, political behaviours and attitudes, life-styles, even reasons for making war were inadequate and outdated. It was a war of tragic waste and stupidity.

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

PART FOUR

"When, in August, 1914, it was seen that the Germans were concentrating practically four-fifths of their armies against France and leaving only a handful of Divisions to guard their eastern frontiers against Russia, high hopes were entertained that these slender forces would be overwhelmed or forced to retreat, and that Germany would be invaded continuously from the east. ... We counted on this increasing pressure from the East to retrieve the situation in the West, and to force the Germans to recall their invading armies to the defence of their own soil."[1]

These hopes were not fulfilled. In little over a fortnight the twenty Russian divisions were cut to pieces by the fourteen German divisions. With Russia in abeyance, Germany would have been able to turn her entire military strength on France and the "unready" armies of Great Britain, which would have been disastrous. As it was, Russia could not be re-armed in less than a year, late 1915. In the Balkan Peninsula, the Southern Flank, Serbia had twice repelled the Austrian invaders. Turkey had declared war upon the Allies. Greece, Serbia and Roumania were divided from Bulgaria by the hatreds of their recent war, but all

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[1] P.298. The World Crisis, Abridged & Revised. 1932.

four were natural enemies of Austria and Turkey. It was one of Churchill's great disappointments in this messy war that the Balkan States could not be united to fight together against Austria and Turkey to redress their historical grievances. Further, their inclusion would strongly influence Italy to bring her 2 000 000 soldiers to the Allied cause.

In England, the Admiralty record was not good. The German battleships *Goeben* and *Breslau* had escaped into the Black Sea. The *Emden* had sunk several merchant ships and had bombarded the oil tanks at Madras, to the horror and consternation of the Indians. The *Hogue, Cressy* and *Aboukir* were sunk. Then the *Audacious*, one of the newest battleships of the Fleet, was sunk by a mine off the Irish coast. Jellicoe, the Admiral of the Home Fleet, wanted this news suppressed, which it was for two weeks, which angered the press and public. The public criticism centred on Churchill, who, it was felt, "continually interfered with the conduct of Admiralty business, that he did not allow the expert advice of the Sea Lords to influence his policy, and that he had converted the once harmonious Board of Admiralty into a mere platform for his own erratic exuberance." [2]
The First Sea Lord was Prince Louis Battenberg. He was very upright, very loyal, very brave, very conventional, but not

[2] P.144. M. Gilbert. The Challenge of War. Vol.III.

clever. He resigned, saying: "I have lately been driven to the painful conclusion that at this juncture my birth & parentage have the effect of impairing in some respects my usefulness at the Bd of Admy. In these circumstances I feel it to be my duty, as a loyal subject of HM to resign the office of First Sea Lord, hoping thereby to facilitate the test of the Admn of the great service to wh I have devoted my life, & to ease the burden laid on HM Ministers." [3]

And Churchill brought in Lord Fisher as First Sea Lord, and Sir Ian Wilson as Chief of Staff. Churchill encountered quite strong resistance from George V, who not only did not like Lord Fisher's appointment, he said that the Navy would not like it either. To describe Fisher fairly gently, he was brilliant and unreliable, and monumentally conceited. He had favourites, and violent long-lasting feuds with his non-favourites. His letters read like something from the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, dropping bits of gossip into everyone's letterboxes with endless cautions not to tell anyone else. For some reason, Churchill loved him, and never wavered in his complete loyalty, although Fisher insulted, betrayed and libelled him. In spite of the antagonism towards Lord Fisher, Churchill had his way, however, and Fisher became First Sea Lord. He was aware of how difficult

[3] P.149. M. Gilbert. The Challenge of War. Vol.III.

and tricky he was, indeed he wrote:

"There is no doubt whatever that Fisher was right in nine-tenths of what he fought for. His great reforms sustained the power of the Royal Navy at the most critical period in its history. He gave the Navy the kind of shock which the British Army received at the time of the South African War. After a long period of serene and unchallenged complacency, the mutter of distant thunder could be heard. It was Fisher who hoisted the storm-signal and beat all hands to quarters. He forced every department of the Naval Service to review its position and question its own existence. He shook them and beat them and cajoled them out of slumber into intense activity. But the Navy was not a pleasant place while this was going on. The 'Band of Brothers' tradition which Nelson had handed down, was for the time, but only for the time, discarded; and behind the open hostility of chieftains flourished the venomous intrigues of their followers.

"I have asked myself whether all this could not have been avoided; whether we could not have had the Fisher reforms without the Fisher methods. My conviction is that Fisher was maddened by the difficulties and obstructions which he encountered, and became violent in the process of fighting so

hard at every step.

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"I found Fisher a veritable volcano of knowledge and inspiration; .....once begun (on naval ideas and functions) he could hardly stop. I plied him with questions,. and he poured out ideas. It was always a joy to me to talk to him on these great matters, but most of all was he stimulating in all that related to the design of ships. He also talked brilliantly about Admirals, but here one had to make a heavy discount on account of the feuds. My intention was to hold the balance even, and while adopting in the main the Fisher policy, to insist upon an absolute cessation of the vendetta." [4]

Churchill was never in the least afraid of working with him, and he thought he knew him so well that they could come through any difficulty together. In this he was mistaken.

Fisher's brilliance was concerned with naval machines. He foresaw the need to change from coal to oil driven ships, and the advances in submarine and air warfare, and worked on the necessary defences against these advances.

Another colleague whom Churchill found increasingly difficult was

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[4] Pp.66 & 67. World Crisis, Abridged & Revised. 1932.

Lord Kitchener. The whole War Cabinet did. As the country had very little faith in Churchill, so its faith in Kitchener was boundless. Kitchener became Secretary of State for War with great public acclaim, and huge personal authority. Churchill sets out his character, which was to have such a strong effect on the First World War, very clearly. He is vindicated in his views by subsequent modern research which has ample documentation to endorse Churchill's description:

"The workings of Lord Kitchener's mind constituted at this period a feature almost as puzzling as the great war problem itself. His prestige and authority were immense. He was the sole mouthpiece of War Office opinion in the War Council. Everyone had the greatest admiration for his character, and everyone felt fortified, amid the terrible and incalculable events of the opening months of the war, by his commanding presence. When he gave a decision it was invariably accepted as final. He was never, to my belief, overruled by the War Council or the Cabinet in any military matter, great or small. No single unit was ever sent or withheld contrary, not merely to his agreement, but to his advice. Scarcely anyone ever ventured to argue with him in Council. Respect for the man, sympathy for him in his immense labours, confidence in his professional judgment, and the belief that he had plans deeper and wider than any we could see,

silenced misgivings and disputes, whether in the Council or at the War Office. All-powerful, unperturbable, reserved, he dominated absolutely our counsels at this time in all that concerned the organization and employment of the armies.

"Yet behind this imposing and splendid front lay many weaknesses, evidences of which became increasingly disquieting. The Secretary of State for War had burdens laid upon him which no man, no three men even of his great capacity, could properly discharge. He had absorbed the whole War Office into his spacious personality. The General Staff was completely in abeyance, save as a machine for supplying him with information. Even as such a machine it was woefully weak. All the ablest officers and leading and strongest minds in the General Staff and Army Council, with the exception of Sir John Cowans, the Quartermaster-General, had hurried eagerly out of the country with the Expeditionary Force and were now in France, feeling that they ought to control the whole conduct of the war from the highly localized point of view of the British General Headquarters at St. Omer. In their place, filling vitally important situations, were officers on the retired list or men whose opinions had never counted weightily in British military thought. These officers were petrified by Lord Kitchener's personality and position. They none of them showed the natural

force and ability to argue questions out with him as man to man. He towered up in his uniform as a Field-Marshal and Cabinet Minister besides, and they saluted as subordinates on a drill-ground. They never presented him with well-considered general reasonings about the whole course of the war. They stood ready to execute his decisions to the best of their ability. It was left to the Members of the War Council to write papers upon the broad strategic view of the war. It was left to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Lloyd George, to discern and proclaim to the Cabinet in unmistakable terms the impending military collapse of Russia. It was left to me to offer at any rate one method of influencing the political situation in the Near East in default of comprehensive military schemes. And Lord Kitchener himself was left to face the rushing swirling torrent of events with no rock of clear, well-thought-out doctrine and calculation at his back.

"In consequence, he gave decisions now in this direction, now in that, which were markedly influenced by the daily impressions he sustained, which impressions were often of a fleeting nature. As a result his decisions were sometimes contradictory. He was torn between two perfectly clear-cut views of the war, both urged upon him with force and passion, with wealth of fact and argument. All the leading soldiers in the British Army, all the august

authority of the French High Command, asserted that the sole path to victory lay in sending every single man and gun and shell to the French Front to "kill Germans" and break their lines in the West. All the opinion of the War Council, which certainly contained men who had established themselves as the leading figures of the public life of their generation, was focused upon the Southern and Eastern theatre as the scene for the campaign of 1915. Kitchener himself was strongly drawn in this direction by his own Eastern interest and knowledge. He saw to the full the vision of what success in this quarter would mean, but he also felt what we did not feel in the same degree - the fearful alternative pressure to which he was continually subjected from the French Front.

"The problem was not insoluble. The task of reconciling these apparently opposed conceptions was not impossible. A well-conceived and elaborated plan and programme could have been devised in January for action in the Near East in March, April, May or even June, and for a subsequent great concentration and operation on the Western Front in the Autumn of 1915, or better still under far more favourable conditions in the spring of 1916. The successive development of both policies in their proper sequence and each in its integrity was perfectly feasible if the great authorities concerned could have been won over. However,

in the event Lord Kitchener succumbed to conflicting forces and competing policies.

"Besides these trials and burdens, to which he was certainly not able to rise superior, stood the whole vast business of recruiting, organizing and equipping the New Armies; and behind this again there now marched steadily into view a series of problems connected with the manufacture and purchase of munitions upon a scale never dreamed of by any human being up till this period. These problems comprised the entire social and industrial life of the country and touched the whole economic and financial system of the world. Add to this the daily exposition of all military business in Cabinet and in Council - a process most trying and burdensome to Lord Kitchener, and one in which he felt himself at a disadvantage: add, further, the continuous series of decisions upon executive matters covering the vast field of the war, including important operations and expeditions which were campaigns in themselves, and it will be realized that the strain that descended upon the King's greatest subject was far more than mortal man could bear.

"It must, however, be stated that Lord Kitchener in no way sought to lighten these terrific burdens. On the contrary, he resented promptly any attempt to interfere in and even scrutinize his vast

domains of responsibility. He resisted tenaciously the efforts which were made from January (1914) onwards to remove the production of munitions of all kinds from his control as Secretary of State. He devolved on to subordinates as little as he could. He sought to manage the Great War by the same sort of personal control that he had used with so much success in the command of the tiny Nile Expedition. He kept the General Staff, or what was left of it, in a condition of complete subservience and practical abeyance. He even reached out, as his Cabinet Office justified, into political spheres in questions of Ireland, of Temperance, and of Industrial Organization.

"It is idle at this date to affect to disregard or conceal these facts. Indeed the greatness of Lord Kitchener and his lasting claims upon the respect and gratitude of succeeding generations of his fellow-countrymen, for whose cause and safety he fought with single-hearted purpose and a giant strength, will only be fortified by the fullest comprehension of his character and of his difficulties. If this story and the facts and documents on which it rests constitute any reflection upon his military policy, I must also testify to the over-whelming weight of the burdens laid upon him, to his extraordinary patience and courage in all the difficulties and perplexities through which we were

passing, and to his unvarying kindness and courtesy to me." [5]

The first five months of the War had seen defeats for the Allies, military, naval, strategic and diplomatic. On January 1, 1915, Lloyd George circulated a paper drawing attention to unfounded optimism which prevailed about war situation: the increasing failure of Russia as a prime factor, and to the need for action in the Balkan Peninsula to rally Greece and Bulgaria to the cause of the Allies. Colonel Hankey too gave a memorandum pinpointing Near East as true field for the allied action and initiative in 1915.[6] Asquith, in a note to Venetia Stanley, said he was altogether opposed to a heroic adventure against Gallipoli and the Dardanelles.[7]

Russia asked Lord Kitchener "to arrange a demonstration of some kind against Turks elsewhere, either naval or military, and to spread reports which would cause Turks, who he said are very liable to go off at a tangent, to withdraw some of the forces now acting against Russians in the Caucasus, and thus ease the position of Russians." [8]

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[5] P.358-9. The World Crisis. Abridged & Revised. 1932.

[6] P.320. The World Crisis. Abridged & Revised. 1932

[7] P.223. M.Gilbert. The Challenge of War. Vol.III. 1971

[8] P.321. The World Crisis. Abridged & Revised. 1932

Kitchener and Churchill both saw need and advantages and far-reaching consequences of a successful attack on Constantinople. If there was any prospect of a serious attempt to force the straits of the Dardanelles at a later stage, it would be in the highest degree improvident to stir them up for the sake of a mere demonstration. Churchill put this point forward, and suggested alternative diversions to help the Russians. Lord Kitchener did not dissent from the argument, but he returned steadily and decidedly to the statement that he had no troops to spare and could not face a large new expansion of our military commitments.[9]

On January 3, Lord Fisher wrote to Churchill:

"I consider the attack on Turkey holds the field! but only if it's IMMEDIATE! However, it won't be! Our Aulic Council will adjourn till the following Thursday fortnight! (N.B. *When did we meet last and what came of it ???*)

.....

III. The Greeks to go for Gallipoli at the same time as we go for Besika, and the Bulgarians for Constantinople, and the Russians,

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[9] P.321. The World Crisis. Abridged & Revised. 1932.

the Servians, and Roumanians for Austria (*all this you said yourself!*).

IV. Sturdee forces the Dardanelles at the same time with "Majestic" class and "Canopus" Class! God bless him!

But as the great Napoleon said, 'CELERITY' - without it- 'FAILURE'!..... Yours,

F.[10]

The first paragraph of this letter is interesting in that the War Council at this time was meeting only once a week. Churchill also complains of this - "I think the War Council ought to meet daily for a few days next week. No topic can be pursued to any fruitful result at weekly intervals." he wrote to the Prime Minister on December 31, 1914. This slow rate of meeting would have given a very slow rate of action on any matter, especially the Dardanelles issue.

However, says Churchill, this "series of weighty representations had the effect of making me move. I thought I saw a great convergence of opinion in the direction of that attack upon the Dardanelles which I had always so greatly desired. The arguments

[10] P.323. The World Crisis. Abridged & Revised. 1932

in its favour were over-whelming. And now the highest authorities, political, naval and military, were apparently ready to put their shoulders to the wheel. Lloyd George [solidly behind it].....I knew from my talks with Mr. Balfour that he too was profoundly impressed by the advantages which might be reaped by successful action in this S.E. Theatre. Lastly, the F.O. and Sir Edward Grey were, of course, keenly interested." [11]

Mr. Balfour pointed out that a successful attack on the Dardanelles would achieve the following results:-

It would cut the Turkish army in two;
It would put Constantinople under our control;
It would give us the advantage of having the Russian wheat, and enable Russia to resume exports;
This would restore the Russian exchanges, which were falling owing to her inability to export, and causing great embarrassment;
It would also open a passage to the Danube;
It was difficult to imagine a more helpful operation.

Edward Grey said it would also finally settle the attitude of Bulgaria and the whole of the Balkans.

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[11] P.324. The World Crisis. Abridged & Revised. 1932

The successful forcing of the Dardanelles would open up the sea of Marmara and also the Black Sea, giving direct access to and from Russia to the Mediterranean, and also direct access to Austria via the Danube which drained into the Black Sea. It would also surround the Central Powers (Austria & Germany) effectively.

Churchill asked Vice-Admiral Carden, in command of the Anglo-French Squadrons in the Eastern Mediterranean, for ideas and information; his reply:

5th Jan, 1915.
Vice Admiral Carden to First Lord.
With reference to your telegram of 3rd instant, I do not consider Dardanelles can be rushed.
They might be forced by extended operations with large number of ships.

And the idea of gradual forcing makes its appearance, and with it, the possible necessity of back-up army troops to hold what had been gained. It would be no good shooting from sea if the enemy could reorganize the gun emplacements on land each night. Carden thought, though, that the straits may be forced in a

purely Naval operation.

Carden was asked for, and gave, a plan for forcing the Dardanelles, and also the naval requirements needed. The invention of mines added a new aspect to planning such an operation. The plan was approved by the War Council, the Cabinet, the Admiralty, including Fisher, and Kitchener, and more ships and supplies were ordered to the Eastern Mediterranean. Certain ships from the Home Fleet were despatched, and furthermore, the *Queen Elizabeth*, the newest and fastest battleship of the fleet, was sent to the Dardanelles to try out her huge 15-inch guns.

Churchill thought that it was at about this time that Lord Fisher began to revoke on his support of the Dardanelles operation. Lord Fisher threatened to resign, and was extremely upset about the Home Fleet being weakened for a war theatre so far away.

The Naval plans and preparations went ahead. Greece allowed the Royal Navy to use the spacious harbour of Mudros on the island of Lemnos. A small Marine force was sent out to provide landing parties for Admiral Carden's fleet, in case they were needed. Other troops became available, for example the Australians, South Africans and territorials, and Lord Fisher began to press for

them to take part in the Dardanelles operation. The idea of an army in the South Eastern theatre - based in Egypt and Greece- could be fully justified by the good effects it would have on the Balkans and Turkey, the support for Russia, and the capture of Constantinople, were immensely desirable. The War Council resolved, on February 16, 1915, to send the 29th Division to Lemnos. The 29th Division were seasoned and experienced troops, rested and re-armed and due to go back to the Western Front. Churchill dates this decision as the foundation of the military attack on the Dardanelles, and with customary zeal threw himself into arranging transport and protection for the 29th Division and supplies to go to Lemnos.

The 29th division was withdrawn on February 19, by Kitchener. Churchill left the embarkation plans in place. Kitchener refused point blank to send the 29th Division, saying it was necessary to keep it in France and the Western Front. He then, without informing Churchill, ordered the Naval Transports to stand down, and the fleet of 22 vessels was dispersed. His Aide-de-Camp went to the First Sea Lord, who assumed that Churchill and Kitchener had together agreed. Kitchener offered unseasoned Australian troops, half measures, hamstrung and conditional. On February 26, after a War Council meeting at which Kitchener still refused to send the 29th Division to the

Eastern theatre, Churchill "inquired from the Transport Department as to what exact state of preparation the transports were in, expecting to find that they were ready. I then learned that on the 20th they had been countermanded and were now utterly dispersed. I was staggered at this, and wrote at once to Lord Kitchener in protest." [12] There was now no possibility that they would be ready before March 16. Churchill re-instated order at once, but "the delay in assembling the ships seriously affected all subsequent troop movements, and made impossible any serious attempt to co-ordinate a military landing with the naval attack." [13]

War Council's decision to hold back 29th div. troops for Dardanelles demonstrated Kitchener's veto was all-powerful. Although Churchill had been supported by Asquith, Lloyd George and the increasingly influential Hankey, his plea had failed. No one found it easy to argue with Kitchener at the War Council. He would not listen - facts did not seem to sway him. He answered questions minimally. When he thought his military judgement was being criticized he quickly took umbrage. If he would not read or listen, they could not command him. The Liberal Government could not afford to lose its hero. Kitchener's presence as

[12] P.368. The World Crisis. Abridged & Revised. 1932.

[13] P.314. The World Crisis, Abridged & Revised. 1935.

Secretary of State for War protected the vulnerable W.O from serious conservative attack, the reverse effect of Churchill's presence at the Admiralty.

Churchill was extremely worried about the lack of planning, communication and information levels among army personnel about the Dardanelles. He arranged for an interview with Kitchener & Asquith and formally asked Kitchener if he took responsibility for military operations in Dardanelles. Kitchener accepted the responsibility and Churchill transferred the Royal Naval Division to Kitchener's command. On March 10, The War Office, and Kitchener, ordered the 29th Division, and on March 16 the earliest transports sailed. The War Office, however, did not embark the Division in the ships in any order or organization to fight on arrival at its destination. When the Division reached Lemnos, it became apparent that it would have to completely unload, re-assemble its men, arms, equipment and supplies, and re-load in proper order. Mudros Harbour did not have the facilities for such an operation. They eventually had to go on to Cairo, and Kitchener delayed them indefinitely there because he felt Cairo might be attached by Egyptian troops.

With the denial of the 29th Division, the plan was "emasculated." Should Churchill have gone as far as resignation? Maybe, but he was always inclined to over-optimism, specially in the face of Admiral Carden's initial successes in the Dardanelles. His

optimism and conviction that this was a good strategy led him to stand aside, and let Kitchener do it, even to the extent of putting the Royal Naval Division under his command. Fisher was beginning to dislike the Dardanelles operations, but endorsed Churchill's cable to Carden :

The number of ships at your command will probably admit of Constantinople being summoned (to surrender) when the Turko-German Fleet has been destroyed, without prejudice to the other warlike movements just described against the Bosphorus and railways. The peaceful surrender of the city is our object, and if it appears expedient to you and likely to prevent massacre or futile resistance, you can, at any time after you have entered the Sea of Marmora, assure the American Ambassador or other neutral or Turkish authorities accessible to you that prompt obedience and the orderly surrender of the city will safeguard all private property against injury, and all religious buildings, especially mosques, and objects venerated by Moslems will be treated with the utmost respect...

With the delay of the transports and the 29th Division, Carden reported a slowing down. Greece wanted to get to Constantinople, and would have supported the British cause, but was frightened off by the Russians with whom they would not work. So Churchill

was deprived of valuable Greek support of men and destroyers in the Dardanelles. Furthermore there was increased danger from mines, torpedo tubes, and submarines. [14]

Kitchener told Churchill that he would appoint Hamilton to command the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force (the name given to the army gathering for the Dardanelles), and six days later, on March 10, Hamilton was told of his appointment. He was given 24 hours to gather his staff together and make his arrangements, largely assisted by Churchill who felt strongly that Hamilton should be in the Eastern Mediterranean as quickly as possible. Hamilton admitted that he needed more courage to deal with Kitchener than with the enemy. However, he went to the Dardanelles, but was delayed (again) by Kitchener. Kitchener appeared loath to commit anything - troops, air support for Hamilton, equipment, the 29th Division, munitions, let alone give clear instructions or goals.

The result of these delays and prevarications enabled the Turks to mobilize men and equipment and munitions down into the area threatened, the Hellespont and round the Sea of Mamara. They also had time to mine the Sea of Mamara, which was one of Admiral Carden's real fears. He alerted the Admiralty to the guns on the

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[14] Martin Gilbert: 1914-1918: P.374.

shore and the need for minesweeping.

On March 15, Hankey wrote to Lord Esher:

Secret

My dear Lord Esher,

..Although on general principles this operation is brilliantly conceived, and quite correct... I am not at all satisfied that it is being carried out in the best possible manner. Troops ought to have been there, or at any rate, within a day or two's reach, when the bombardment began. There ought to have been no blatant Press announcement at the outset, and the bombardment ought to have been announced merely as a demonstration. While the bombardment was commencing the transports ought to have appeared at some entirely different point of the Turkish Coast, such as Alexandretta, Haifa, or elsewhere. Then the troops ought to have come in as a bolt from the blue, immediately following the collapse of the outer forts, and closely supported by the Fleet, to have captured the plateau overlooking the forts of the Narrows by a coup-de-main. I urged this at the outset, but my suggestions fell on deaf ears. Now we have given the Turks time to assemble a vast force, to pour in field guns and howitzers, to entrench every landing place, and the operation has become a most formidable one. Please burn this. Yours ever, M.P.A. Hankey.

But Kitchener was quite adamant that this was NOT a combined operation. He instructed Hamilton accordingly, that is, that the Army was second string to the Navy. Admiral Carden collapsed under the strain, and Admiral de Robeck took over. The Dardanelles and Gallipoli became one of the bloodiest and most expensive battles in history, a disaster. On March 18, 1915, the Navy steamed into the Sea of Mamara to destroy the gun emplacements on the shores, witnessed by Sir Ian Hamilton who could only watch, as this was NOT a combined operation. Admiral de Robeck nailed the Turkish Forts, fought for 4 hours, but lost first the French battleship "Bouvet", and then "Invincible", "Irresistible" and "Ocean" were mined. De Robeck withdrew.
At the subsequent Cabinet meeting, Kitchener was asked about military support, he said he did not know, and had no plans or information, but that Sir Ian would have to think one up. (an attitude surely terrifying in a Secretary of State for War.)
As always when the Dardanelles were under discussion, the minds of Ministers wandered into the territorial sphere. No one felt that they were in the shadow of a naval disaster. They eagerly devised schemes of partition and control which presupposed victory. No one pointed out that this might be the moment to cancel the attack altogether.

Churchill returned to his view that such discussions were

premature, and should be postponed: "Surely we did not intend to leave this inefficient and out-of-date nation, which had long misruled one of the most fertile countries of the world, still in possession! Turkey had long shown herself to be inefficient as a governing power, and it was time for us to make a clean sweep." Says Martin Gilbert: These extreme sentiments were in direct and violent contrast to Churchill's earlier sympathies for the Young Turks and their revolution. [15]

Hamilton reported to Kitchener that he was "reluctantly driven to the conclusion that the Straits are not likely to be forced by battleships as at one time seemed probable and that if my troops are to take part, it will not take the subsidiary form anticipated. The Army's part will be more than mere landings of parties to destroy Forts, it must be a deliberate and progressive military operation carried out at full strength so as to open a passage for the Navy."[16]

The War Cabinet decided to continue. de Robeck said he must suspend operations when Hamilton told him the 29th Division would not be available till 14th April. This delay was due to the necessity of sending all transports back to Cairo for unloading,

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[15] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III: p.355.

[16] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III: p.357.

sorting and re-loading the 29th Division, which had been embarked in such chaos on March 16th. But now the Turkish gun emplacements were prepared for attack. Churchill wanted very much to continue the attack, but Admirals Fisher and Wilson were against it. Even his brother Jack, on Ian Hamilton's staff, supported the view that the Dardanelles were much tougher than at first thought.

Admiral de Robeck wrote to Churchill stating strongly that an army operation should supercede the Naval operation. It did, and from then on Ian Hamilton and Kitchener were in command.

Meanwhile, threats by Germany on Holland recalled the dangers in Europe, and Churchill dared not send any more ships or vessels out to the Dardanelles.

"The enterprise to which Churchill had committed so much of his energy and on which he had come to base so many of his hopes, was clearly at an end. Without any massive naval disaster, without any of the harsh slaughter which had become common on the western front, without any conclusive sign that a naval victory was impossible, he had to abandon the most glittering opportunity of his life. He continued to advocate the need to defeat Turkey; he pressed for military action on the Gallipoli Peninsula at the

earliest opportunity and with the maximum force. But from the moment that military preparations began the power to act passed from Churchill's hands. As Secretary of State for War, Kitchener controlled all military initiatives at the Dardanelles."[17]

After the decision to make it a military attack, Churchill was out in the cold for a few weeks. Kitchener was very secretive about plans, and Churchill was not involved. In fact, he was almost totally excluded, except for the Navy's transport responsibilities. Admiral de Robeck co-operated fully, except for repeated requests for more officers, which were refused categorically by Lord Fisher.

So Fisher began to agitate, by working up Admiral Jellicoe, who complained about the Home Fleet. For Churchill personally, things went from bad to worse. His relationship with Lord Fisher, his First Sea Lord, deteriorated rapidly and violently. Fisher became completely irrational. He had a strong argument with Lloyd George. There is a flare-up with Kitchener who would not give Churchill necessary information. Churchill wrote a handsome apology, but none was received in return. Hankey tried to work up opposition to the Dardanelles operation,

[17] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III 12. P.380.

believing it was not going to be successful, and asked Balfour to write to Churchill, who rejected the letter.

The landings commenced, planned as well as possible by the Navy, but the Army's plans pitifully shallow. Churchill wrote to Kitchener, though it was never sent, he felt compelled to intervene in the military arrangements which Kitchener guarded so jealously:

"I hope you will not cut Hamilton too fine. A loyal man like that will go on with what he has got & never say a word till he cracks up. The easy good fortunes of a beginning may depart again.

I should feel very much happier if you could manage to have another 20,000 in the offing - even if they were never landed. It would be a great insurance; & surely at a pinch you could spare them from Egypt for a fortnight. Do not brush this aside with confident scorn. The things that have to be done are very difficult and a sincere opinion deserves to be considered.

Do consider this. Don't run short of stuffing behind your attack - even if you never need it. My feeling is you are running it very fine.

Don't be vexed with me for bringing this up. It costs so little to have a shot in the locker.

Don't wait till he asks you. It is sure to be too late then."[18]

Churchill's anxiety was very strong. His knowledge of Kitchener was an uncomfortable thing, but even so he did not wish to scrap Dardanelles - his optimism told him that Kitchener was a good commander and could possibly pull it off, but he was deeply worried. He cabled de Robeck, assuring him of his support. This is an example of Churchill's stubbornness. He appears incapable of abandoning a good plan which has turned sour. He was so trained to soldier on doggedly against any odds that he did not perceive that given the drawback of Kitchener's ability and authority, the plan could not work. It was sabotaged from within, and Churchill could not believe that such a flaw was valid.

In France, things were not going too well, and Kitchener ordered ammunition to be sent from France to the Dardanelles. General French objected, and was given a direct order, demoralizing under the circumstances.

Lord Fisher resigned, and his timing could not have been more disastrous. He was not rational, he was probably wildly over-

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[18] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. P.409-410.

stressed, but he bothered everyone with his grievances (including Bonar Law, the leader of the opposition), and demanded to be given total control of Naval policy. He left his post, and Asquith ordered him back to it in the name of the King. Asquith tried to heal the rift, but Bonar Law told Lloyd George that if Churchill AND Fisher did not go, he would bring down the Government, and a Coalition formed. Asquith agreed, to the surprise and concern of the Cabinet. Nor did Churchill, in the early stage, know of his decision to accept a coalition Government. Martin Gilbert comments that Asquith was in deep personal distress at this moment, which probably hastened this extraordinarily swift decision. Venetia Stanley had told Asquith that she was to marry Edwin Montagu, and that she was henceforth cut off from him completely. Venetia Stanley was a close friend of Asquith's daughter Violet, he had fallen in love with her, and corresponded with her daily, confiding his most personal views on daily governmental matters. This was unknown to Bonar Law, Lloyd George, A.J.Balfour and Churchill. However, Churchill was suddenly and completely out of the Admiralty.

May 17th was for Churchill an extraordinary day: "In the morning I had prepared for a Parliamentary ordeal of the most searching character; in the afternoon for a political crisis fatal to myself, in the evening for the supreme battle on the sea. For

one day, it was enough." Even for Churchill.

So Churchill fell under the ax of the press, the Tories, his colleagues, and the Government. He was the scapegoat for everything that was wrong, not only the Dardanelles.

After six days of waiting, he was finally rejected by Asquith. He tried to canvas support from anyone who would listen. Asquith was pressured into keeping Kitchener, who paid Churchill a farewell visit. As Kitchener left, he said majestically: "Well there was one thing at any rate they cannot take from you. The Fleet was ready." [19]

Churchill accepted the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster which carried with it a place in the Cabinet. The whole country and press clamoured for his removal. He saw the King, and left with a very good face. Clementine recalled to Martin Gilbert that "The Dardanelles haunted him for the rest of his life. He always believed in it. When he left the Admiralty he thought he was finished.... I thought he would never get over the Dardanelles; I thought he would die of grief." [20]

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[19] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III.14. p.469.

[20] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. Ch.14. p.473.

WINSTON CHURCHILL

PART V

CHURCHILL'S EXILE FROM HIGH OFFICE

Churchill's fall from grace started a few weeks before, in mid-April. He saw in Asquith a man whose powers of concentration were waning, and felt that he lacked the ruthlessness needed to pursue an effective war policy. When the question of a second naval attempt to force the Dardanelles had arisen in March, Churchill believed, as he later wrote in "Great Contemporaries," that Asquith "was resolute to continue, but that unhappily for himself and for all others he did not thrust to the full length of his convictions." From that moment Asquith's patronage had been withdrawn. Without Asquith's support Churchill was entirely vulnerable. If Asquith had not doubted Churchill's reliability, he would not have yielded to Fisher's pressure to give him a veto on reinforcements to the Dardanelles. But he had given such a veto, and in doing so had effectively withdrawn his earlier support for Churchill. Churchill saw Asquith as the man responsible for his fall. The change in behaviour towards him hurt badly.

But Asquith found Churchill's eagerness to do and dare, his

insistent calls for speed and action, his repeated desire to be in the war zone, his changing and exhausting moods, his emotional appeals to the stage of history, too frequent always to be taken seriously. People saw him as a man of blood, lusting for battle, personally ambitious.

In later years Churchill looked back with pride upon what he regarded as major achievements: the preparation of the Navy in the years leading up to war, the mobilization of the Fleet, its successful and secret transfer from the Channel to the North Sea, the safe transport of troops from Britain and the Empire to the Zones of war, the hunting down of von Spee, the clearing of the German raiders from the oceans, the maintenance of Britain's naval and maritime supremacy, the check to the German advance at Antwerp, the success of the armoured cars and the naval airmen, the confidence provided by his public speeches and the fertility of his private counsel.

Churchill's post was minor in the Coalition Cabinet. Asquith saw Churchill's presence in a Coalition as a focus for grave dissension, which he couldn't face. Any good leadership of the Admiralty was clouded by Coronel, Antwerp and the Dardanelles, which was seen as a failure because of Fisher's resignation. It was not at that stage a complete failure, but seen as such.

Churchill was neutralized. He had very little to do for the Duchy of Lancaster - just appoint some magistrates. And no one could accuse Churchill of enjoying idleness.

He was disappointed and frustrated, and in September he asked Asquith if he could leave the Government and command a Brigade in France. Asquith was sympathetic, but Kitchener immovably objected to Churchill taking a permanent post in his own armies.

Churchill was desperate for employment. He found it increasingly difficult to watch from afar the discussions and slow decisions of the War Cabinet. He was not, of course, quiet at the meetings he attended, but nobody listened much.
Desperate for full employment - and his sort of full employment was huge - he did a report on starting an Air Ministry. Asquith ignored it. Churchill had, in 1914, set in motion work to be done on a trench-spanning car, his first formal proposal for a mechanical device to influence trench warfare. Asquith passed it on to Kitchener, who set in motion a certain amount of design work at the War Office.

In February 1915, he had had dinner with the Duke of Westminster, who was serving in Royal Naval Air Service. One of his fellow-officers, Major Hetherington, was convinced that the idea of an

armoured car was possible and would be very beneficial to the war effort. Churchill was, of course, very enthusiastic, and next morning sent for one of his leading ship designers - by name Captain Eustace Henry William Tennyson D'Eyncourt - and asked the two officers to go exhaustively into designing a "land-ship". Hetherington and Capt. Seuter examined the possibility of a caterpillar type of propulsion. To mystify those who might see the designs or early experiments in progress, the new weapons were called 'Water carriers for Russia' and it was put about that they were some new method of bringing water forward in large quantities to the troops in the battle area. Col. Swinton, seeing that they would probably be abbreviated in the War Office to 'WCs for Russia', suggested that they should be called 'tanks'.[1] When Churchill fell from power, the project nearly lost its money, and did lose its momentum. Churchill kept it alive by repeated letters and requests to those in power, but it slowed almost to a stop. He wrote to Jack Seely: "It is odious to me to remain here watching sloth & folly with full knowledge & no occupation."[2]

The Churchills at this time used to go to Hoe Farm for the weekends. Gwen Churchill, wife of Jack, set up her easel and

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[1] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. Chap.16. p.536.

[2] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III, Ch. 16. p.538.

started painting. Churchill watched, tried it, became intrigued and started to paint. His secretary, Eddie Marsh recalled that "the new enthusiasm... was a distraction and a sedative that brought a measure of ease to his frustrated spirit." [3]

Churchill's experiments that weekend were the beginning of a new experience which was to bring him comfort until the last years of his life. He found that he could concentrate upon painting to the exclusion of politics. He painted in silence, absorbed entirely by the problem of transferring his subject to the canvas. On June 25, he bought his first easel. Four days later he bought a mahogany palette, oil, turpentine, paints and brushes. On July 2 he returned to Hoe farm. Churchill recalled the next stage in his new adventure:

The palette gleamed with beads of colour; fair and white rose the canvas; the empty brush hung poised, heavy with destiny, irresolute in the air. My hand seemed arrested by a silent veto. But after all the sky on this occasion was unquestionably blue, and a pale blue at that. There could be no doubt that blue paint mixed with white should be put on the top part of the canvas. One really does not need to have an artist's training to see that. It is a starting point open to all. So very gingerly I

[3] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. Ch.16. p.502.

mixed a little blue paint on the palette with a very small brush, and then with infinite precaution made a mark about as big as a bean upon the affronted snow-white shield. It was a challenge, a deliberate challenge; but so subdued, so halting, indeed so cataleptic, that it deserved no response.

The challenge seemed to have failed:

At that moment the loud approaching sound of a motor-car was heard in the drive. From this chariot there stepped swiftly and lightly no other than the gifted wife of Sir John Lavery. "Painting! But what are you hesitating about? Let me have a brush - the big one." Splash into the turpentine, wallop into the blue and the white, frantic flourish on the palette - clean no longer - and then several large, fierce strokes and slashes of blue on the absolutely cowering canvas. Anyone could see that it could not hit back. No evil fate avenged the jaunty violence. The canvas grinned in helplessness before me. The spell was broken. The sickly inhibitions rolled away. I seized the largest brush and fell upon my victim with Berserk fury. I have never felt in awe of a canvas since.[4]

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[4] Painting as a pastime: published in a volume of essays entitled Thoughts and Adventures (Thornton Butterworth, 1932) and in Painting as a Pastime (Oldhams Press and Ernest Benn, 1948).

On July 4th, Balfour, now at the Admiralty, re-employed Lord Fisher as Chairman of Admiralty Board of Inventions and Research. Churchill learned of this from the newspapers. Churchill found that Asquith had approved the appointment. Churchill was justifiably angry. Asquith had himself declared that Fisher had deserted his post in time of war, and had refused to return in spite of being ordered to do so in the name of the King. The reasons for Fishers removal from office had been kept secret. On the other hand, it was Fisher's behaviour which had led to Churchill's removal from office. And Churchill's removal was vicious and public in the extreme. He wrote to Balfour 9th July, 1915:

"Every officer who is under Fisher's ban, and there are many - or who did not actively support him, will fear that he is shortly to return to power. .... Losses when they occur will be used to prove the need of Fisher's return to real control. Successes will be attributed to his influence behind the scenes.
All this must be viewed in relation to a very old man, without the nerve to carry on war, not quite sane in moments of crisis, and perfectly unscrupulous.

In all my conduct in these recent affairs I have tried to act with loyalty and simplicity. I have striven to do everything

that care for the public interests could suggest. I therefore am not actuated by personal feelings, when I say that I am very sorry you did not give me an opportunity of being heard before your decision was taken."[5]

Meanwhile the Dardanelles was drawing to its expensive and bloody climax. More and more men were dribbled in, indecisively, and trained only for trench warfare, so very different from fighting across open land. It was an Army-only exercise. There was a crisis with the commanding officers - they appeared lethargic and self-satisfied. The first landings were on April 25th, and the large offensive, which failed dismally, was on August 6th, three and a half months later. Churchill's questions, advice, suggestions are copious, all ignored. In September, he was thinking in advance of winter conditions for a large army on the Gallipoli peninsula. "Trenches and living shelters should have been long ago properly cemented. Good reservoirs should be made...." Again, Balfour and Kitchener ignored him. Kitchener was ignoring Asquith and the Cabinet as well - Asquith, Balfour and Crewe believed they had a veto on further offensives in France. Kitchener and Joffre had agreed on the necessity of launching a British as well as a French Offensive on the Western Front during September.

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[5] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. Ch. 16. p.507.

Churchill did what he could to clear himself, but it was precious little.

Eventually the Dardanelles War Cabinet was dissolved. Unanimously the correspondence of the time reveals that Kitchener was a disastrous Secretary of State for War. There were no checks on him, either. He had no office in Parliament, and could not be questioned there. His personal popularity was such that politically he was high explosive "a wooden idol, but still worshipped." Asquith would not get rid of him, in spite of earnest representations, because he was NOT going to have Lloyd George as Secretary of State, and he was afraid to activate the political dynamite. Here again we have political expediency over-riding all else, far more important than war, waste, and massive loss of life. Asquith dissolved the large Dardanelles committee and set up a small policy-making committee of three, himself, Kitchener (Army) and Balfour (Navy.) The large committee met last on November 6th, still reaching no decisions.

Churchill resigned from the Ministry. He hoped that he might be offered the command of the British forces fighting against the Germans in East Africa, and there was general support for this idea. "Asquith declined to give Churchill the East AFrican

appointment, which would undoubtedly have aroused Parliamentary criticism." [6] In his farewell speech in the House of Commons, Churchill said that he had not received from the First Sea Lord either the clear guidance before the event or the firm support after which he was entitled to expect. And he reiterated again his constant conviction that taking Constantinople had been a good plan, one that he hoped would prevail.[7]

And Churchill returned to the Army as a Major in the Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars, loaded with best wishes from friends and family, an escaped scapegoat. Max Aitken called to say good-bye and found "the whole household was upside down while the soldier-statesman was buckling on his sword." He went to the North of France to the trenches.

Churchill wrote to his brother Jack on November 19, 1915:

My position at home since I left the Admiralty has been one of such responsibility without control & I have watched all these weary months folly, sloth & indecision ruining large conceptions. I have made up my mind not to return to any Govt during the war except with plenary & effective executive power: & this is a

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[6] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. Ch. 17. p.566

[7] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. Ch. 17. p.56.

condition not likely to be satisfied. So I propose to do my utmost to win my way in the Army wh is my old profession & where as you know my heart has long been.....

I am extremely happy and have regained a peace of mind to wh I had long been a stranger.

He had first to be accepted by the Army itself. When he first arrived, his colonel took him to the front. "The colonel said: "I think I ought to tell you that we were not at all consulted in the matter of your coming to join us."

I replied respectfully that I had had no idea myself which Battalion I was to be sent to, but that I dared say it would be alright. Anyhow we must make the best of it.

There was another prolonged silence.

Then the Adjutant: "I am afraid we have had to cut down your kit rather, Major. There are no communication trenches here. We are doing all our reliefs over the top. The men have little more than what they stand up in. We have found a servant for you, who is carrying a spare pair of socks and your shaving gear. We have had to leave the rest behind."

I said that was quite all right and that I was sure I should be very comfortable.

We continued to progress in the same sombre silence."[8]

The next day the 2nd Grenadier Guards marched this "damned politician" round showing him the trench system until he was ice cold. But with his usual genius and geniality he overcame their doubts and prejudices. And he started his adventures. He was summoned out of the trenches by his commanding general, walked for an hour through wind and cold and mud to meet him, to be told that it was not urgent and another day would do. Churchill was extremely upset. But when he got back to his trench, it had been shelled 15 minutes after he had left, and he would have been killed had he not gone on the fruitless walk. He began to think more kindly of the General.

"One must yield oneself simply & naturally to the mood of the game and trust in God wh is another way of saying the same thing.

These are commonplace experiences out here wh do not excite wonder or even interest," he wrote to Clementine.

On being shelled (26th November):

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[8] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. Ch. 18. p.574. Thoughts & Adventures.

It has not caused me any sense of anxiety or apprehension, nor does the approach of a shell quicken my pulse, or try my nerves or make me about to bob as do so many. It is satisfactory to find that so many years of luxury have in no way impaired the tone of my system. At this game I hope I shall be as good as any.

And on 27th November:

Above all, don't be worried about me. If my destiny has not already been accomplished I shall be guarded surely. If it has been there is nothing that Randolph will need to be ashamed of in what I have done for the country.

He took a day off with a young friend of his, Edward Spiers, a Captain in the 11th Hussars, who wrote in his diary on December 7th, 1915:

We talked literature. Mostly French & politics - I made out a case for the House of Lords & he downed it - no agreement reached. He said some fine things about democracies, their answer to finer calls. Talk on religion - told him my views & he his - he believes he is a spirit which will live, without memory

of the present, in the future.

On November 30th, Lord Curzon had written to Churchill. In London, Asquith, the Coalition, the Cabinet, the War Office were getting closer and closer to chaos. Asquith would do nothing which might threaten his Prime Ministership. Kitchener was going pottier and pottier. The Cabinet had thankfully persuaded him to go out to the Dardanelles and inspect it for himself. He had taken the Seals of Office with him, "apprehending that they would be taken in his absence and transferred to Ll George!" He had returned secretly and deliberately to defeat a "conspiracy" against him. "His telegrams from the Aegean were almost fatuous, being contradictory, unbalanced and destitute of grasp or foresight." Indecision about the policy and/or evacuation of Gallipoli was getting more and more pronounced. Asquith favoured evacuation, Curzon, Landsdowne, Selborne and Crewe were against it. Admiral Wemyss insisted that a further naval attack would turn the balance in favour of a combined military and naval victory. Bonar Law and Lloyd George demanded immediate evacuation. "Balfour is as usual an inscrutable factor, sitting silent and detached as though he were a spectator on Mars, observing through a powerful telescope a fight between the astral inhabitants of Saturn." Curzon had got the decision postponed for a week.

This letter threw Churchill into turmoil. He was very tempted to rush straight back to London, to sort everyone out. But he had to sleep on it overnight, and he realized that it was far too soon. But he wrote a decisive and clear letter to Lord Curzon:

The situation is no longer capable of the good solutions wh were open some months ago: but I do not think the right decisions wd be difficult, if any one had the necessary authority. Broadly speaking my views are yours: withdraw from Salonica: hold on at Gallipoli: use the Salonica and Egyptian forces to renew the attack by land both at Sulva & on the Asiatic side at the earliest moment, in conjunction with a resolute effort by the Fleet. I shd also persevere with the Baghdad expedition and make a further barrage there to the Oriental ambitions of Germany. It is needless to say that energy & efficiency in execution are as important as good decisions in principle.[9]

General French had pressed Churchill to accept command of a Brigade. Churchill had put off the decision, feeling that he would like to find his Army feet again, and to get to know conditions at the front. General French felt that his time was short, Asquith had been hinting that he would like French to

[9] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. Ch.18. P.603. Dec. 8.1915.

resign. Churchill accepted French's offer of a Brigade after he had been at the Front for a month. French was very anxious to get it signed and sealed before he was relieved of his command- an event both he and Churchill knew was imminent. He telephoned Churchill from London on 16th December. He had to tell him that Asquith had vetoed French giving Churchill a Brigade. When French returned to pack up, he showed Asquith's note to Churchill: .."with regard to our conversation about our friend- the appointment might cause some criticism - and should not therefore be made - adding 'Perhaps you might give him a battalion.'" The almost contemptuous indifference of this note was a revelation to me. French was astonished, but in his weak position he cd do nothing, & now he is no longer C in C. Meanwhile he had told everyone that he had given me a Brigade & is of course deeply distressed at the turn of events.[10]

Churchill's comments on Asquith to Clementine Jan 2.1916:

You are a vy sapient cat to write as you do in yr last letter. But I feel that my work with Asquith has come to an end. I have found him a weak and disloyal chief. I hope I shall not ever have to serve under him again. After the "Perhaps he might have a battalion" letter I cannot feel the slightest regard for him

[10] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. p.612. December 18th 1915.

any more. LG is no doubt all you say: but his interests are not divorced from mine and in those circumstances we can work together if occasion arises. After all he always disagreed about D'lles. He was not like HHA, a co-adventurer - approving & agreeing at every stage. And he had the power to put things right with us as regards my policy & myself. But his slothfulness & procrastination ruined the policy, & his political nippiness squandered his credit. However there is no reason why ordinary relations shd not be preserved.

Churchill went to the 6th Royal Scots Fusiliers, an Infantry batallion, as a Colonel. This Batallion has been very badly mauled at the Battle of Loos.

More than half the men & 3/4rs of the officers were shot, & these terrible gaps have been filled up by recruits of good quality, & quite young inexperienced officers. ..... In spite of its crippled condition the regiment has been for two months in the worst part of the line; but now they are resting & do not go in again till the 20th: & then to an easier post. Thus I will have at least a fortnight to pull them together and get them into my hand.

The Regiment was extremely apprehensive about this politician,

this ex-minister, this famous new colonel. Churchill's arrival and subsequent behaviour is a good illustration of being unable to anticipate how he will behave or what action he will take:

Just before noon, an imposing cavalcade arrived. Churchill on a black charger, Archie Sinclair on a black charger, two grooms on black chargers followed by a limber filled with Churchill's luggage - much more than the 35 lbs allowed weight. IN the rear half we saw a curious contraption: a long bath and a boiler for heating the bath water. Churchill proceeded to his headquarters at Moolenacker Farm, a more than usually dirty farm whose farm people were more than usually dirty. There was much saluting on the part of the Officers, the Sergeant-Major, the Prisoners, and the dirty ladies whispered loudly about the minister, the colonel, "which produced an air of irregular friendliness, an international colour, worthy of the occasion."

He then lunched with the Officers, and Hakewill Smith commented: It was quite the most uncomfortable lunch I had ever been at. Churchill didn't say a word: he went right round the table staring each officer out of countenance. We had disliked the idea of Churchill being in command; now, having seen him we disliked the idea even more. At the end of the lunch, he made a short speech: "Gentlemen, I am now your Commanding officer.

Those who support me I will look after. Those who go against me I will break. Good afternoon gentlemen." Everyone was agreed that we were in for a pretty rotten time. [11]

Another serving officer, McDavid wrote:
After a very brief period he had accelerated the morale of officers and men to an almost unbelievable degree. It was sheer personality. We laughed at lots of things he did, but there were other things we did not laugh at for we knew they were sound. He had a unique approach which did wonders to us. He let everyone under his command see that he was responsible, from the very moment he arrived, that they understood not only WHAT they were supposed to do, but WHY they had to do it....

No detail of our daily life was too small for him to ignore. He overlooked nothing... Instead of a quick glance at what was being done he would stop and talk with everyone and probe to the bottom of every activity. I have never known an officer take such pains to inspire confidence or to gain confidence; indeed he inspired confidence in gaining it.

Churchill's only serious disagreement with his officers was over

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[11] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. P.631. Hakewill Smith, surviving officer of Royal Scots Fusiliers.

the question of military discipline. His mind turned instinctively to leniency. "My dear," he wrote to his wife, who worried lest he was too severe, "don't be at all anxious about my being hard on the men. Am I ever hard on anybody? No. I have reduced punishment both in quantity, & method." The 6th Royal Scots Fusiliers had been very badly depleted at Loos in September. On January 17th Churchill heard a special lecture by Colonel Holland on the battle. In a letter to Clementine he said:

Th theatre was crowded with Generals & officers. Jack Seely & I cd not even get a seat, but stood at the wings of the stage. Tom spoke vy well but his tale was one of hopeless failure, of sublime heroism utterly wasted & of splendid Scottish soldiers shorn away in vain... with never the ghost of a chance of success. 6,000 k & w out of 10,000 in this Scottish division alone. Alas alas. Afterwards they asked what was the lesson of the lecture. I restrained an impulse to reply "Don't do it again!" But they will - I have no doubt. [12]

It is a pity he restrained his impulse. It needed saying.

After Loos those left spent time in trenches up to their waists

[12] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. P.641.

in water and mud at Ypres. They had had an extremely tough time. His first question to the first troublemaker who came before him was: "Were you in the battle?" When the man replied "Yes", the charge against him was dismissed. The officers were surprised by the generous act; and horrified when, as McDavid recalled, "everyone then said they had been at Loos".

He considered that no man would wittingly incur the serious penalties inevitable in such a case, did he know that his conduct was in fact precisely such conduct as would render him liable to them. In any event, the Colonel used to say, whether or not the man knew, it was only fair to explain the position to him there and then, and there and then to give him a chance to depart from his insubordinate attitude.

Churchill's offer of a second chance appalled the officers. "I am afraid the men began to realize," wrote Gibb, that they might at least once indulge themselves in the luxury of telling their sergeants to go to hell!" Despite his officers' disapproval, Churchill persevered in what they considered was his unmilitary attitude towards discipline.

On his first afternoon he stated: Gentlemen, we are now going to make war - on the lice." and gave a full blooded discourse on

pulex Europaeus, origin, growth and history in wars ancient and modern, leaving "one agape with wonder at the erudition and force of its author....". A Brewery was located and the vats were adapted into a bathhouse. The regiment was de-loused.

He organized football, jerseys and balls arrived, and to his delight his side won. He rarely missed a game. He caused a sports day and a concert, both very successful.

The battalion moved to the front line on 27th January. The men were worried that the Germans knew who was in the Brigade. Churchill reckoned that if they had, they would have devastated the country for 20 mile around.

"The relief was accomplished this morning before daylight with the utmost precision in under 2 hours. I don't think the grenadiers ever did better. We now hold about 1,000 yards of trenches & I am responsible for whatever happens," he wrote to Clementine.

And coming back:

"The relief went off like machinery. No casualties: & all over in 4 minutes under 2 hours I estimated for. Our companies

have discovered a splendid bath (portable) & a tolerably hot water supply. I am now going to sample it, after 3 days of deprivation of that first of comforts...."

After the bath he wrote to his mother:

There is a battery in the fields behind our house wh the Germans try to hit; & this afternoon they put a dozen shells over us in search of it, wh burst with loud explosions at no gt distance. I had just had a splendid hot bath - the best for a month & was feeling quite deliciously clean, when suddenly a tremendous bang overhead, & I am covered with soot blown down the chimney by the concussion of a shell these careless boshes have fired & wh exploded above our roof, smashing our windows & dirtying me!

The section of frontline trenches which the 6th Scots Fusiliers were defending was close to a village called Ploegsteert, near Ploegsteert Wood. It quickly became "Plugstreet."

Churchill investigated the area and trenches thoroughly, and then turned his attention to No-Man's land. Captain McDavid said:

"The Colonel's first visitation of our posts in No Man's Land nearly brought the whole British Army into action. Clad in his

long trench waterproof, shining knee-high trench boots, blue steel helmet, with his revolver and powerful flash-lamp attached to his web-belt, he preceded me on the journey through the wire."

The powerful flash-lamp was switched on when he crouched in a shellhole, giving away his position to both sides. He quickly killed it. It was later damaged by a shell, and he instantly asked Clementine to get him another.

Hakewill Smith recalled later:

He would often go into No-Man's-land. It was a nerve-racking experience to go with him. He would call out in his loud gruff voice - far too loud it seemed to us "You go that way, I will go this .... Come here, I have found a gap in the German wire. Come over here at once!: He was like a baby elephant out in no-man's-land at night. He never fell when a shell went off; he never ducked when a bullet went past with its loud crack. He used to say, after watching me duck: It's no damn use ducking; the bullet has gone a long way past you by now."

Martin Gilbert comments that Churchill did not seek these dangers for their own sake. He wanted his men to feel that he was one of them, that where the danger was there he would be, that when they

needed guidance or good cheer or courage he would be at hand, and that he would not fail them in their hour of need..... He was determined they should trust him....

Churchill was very concerned with failing people. It was to him an unforgivable sin to let down his men, or his colleagues, national and international, his juniors, his friends. Even Lord Fisher, who he counted very much his friend at one time, he was never vindictive or spiteful about him.

He even set up his easel when at Plugstreet. Hakewill Smith recalled:

Winston started painting the second or third time he went up to the farm. Each time we were in the line he spent some time on his paintings. Gradually, too, the courtyard became more pitted with shellholes. As his painting came nearer to completion, he became morose, angry, and exceedingly difficult to talk to. After five or six days in this mood, he suddenly appeared cheerful and delighted, like a small boy at school. I asked him what had happened, and he said "I have been worried because I couldn't get the shell-hole right in the painting. However I did it it looked like a mountain, but yesterday I discovered that if I put a little bit of white in it, it looked like a hole after all."

A young man from the Royal Engineers, Napier Clavering, was left with Churchill to take charge of trench fortification. He was 24 years old. Churchill told him that the dugouts were not "whizzbang" proof. The young officer promised to do his best. Churchill's next question was: "How much earth do you need to stop a bullet?" "You want at least 3 feet," Napier Clavering replied. "Well", said Churchill, "We'll go up to the front line tonight and have a look. Bring with you a stick three feet long." After dinner Churchill and Napier Clavering left Laurence Farm, walked along the communication trench and reached the front line. Once in the forward trench, they climbed up on the parapet and walked along it for the whole length of the Battalion's line. Napier Clavering had never see an officer take such a passionate interest in the details of trench engineering, but there was more to come, as he recalled:

"Up went a Verey Light. Churchill was on his knees measuring the depth of the earth with the stick. The Hun machine guns opened up, belly high. Why the hell we weren't killed I just don't understand. I didn't want to die; I wanted to kill some of the Hun first. "For God's sake keep still, sir," I hissed. But he didn't take the slightest notice. He was a man who had no physical fear of dying."

In the evenings, Churchill asked questions. He wanted to know if there was a trench digger, which could dig trenches in five minutes. Not a bad idea and one which is taken for granted nowadays. Not to be outdone, Napier Clavering decided to ask his own questions:

I said to him one night after the necessary number of ports, "could you tell us, Sir, what advantage it would be to us to win the war?" There was silence for three minutes. Then for the next twenty minutes he gave us a Parliamentary speech. At the end of each paragraph he looked up, and looked at everybody in the room to see what the effect was. His language was so absolutely marvellous. I was only 22 at the time. My eyes were standing out like hatpins.

Churchill was equally impressed by Napier Clavering. Churchill gave a dissertation on a "Caterpillar", to get over humps and over the wire. He had this idea that a tracked vehicle could cut the German wire, or drag it through and make a gap. WE all thought it an airy fairy idea..... but the young engineer officer took it up with him. He was the only one who encouraged him to talk about it. He realized it was a possibility. They had quite

a discussion about it.[14]

The effect of trench life on Churchill was profound. As the weeks passed, the conditions under which his men were living impressed themselves harshly upon his mind. The danger and appallingly tough conditions were wearing out these young men, and killing them needlessly. He tried to do what he could to encourage them, with leniency, kindness, the generous output of his supportive nature. He moved the troops around during the night and day, because he tried to anticipate where the Germans would shell next. He often had great success, getting very low or even no casualties. He saw, first hand, the patriotism and heroism - and the helplessness - of the forces in the field. He cannot have failed to equate the impersonality and the lack of concern of the War Office and the War Cabinet with the incredible physical conditions of trench warfare. He discovered that if a man was wounded, and went back to England for hospital treatment, he was returned to the trenches immediately he was considered fit again. No leave or holiday was allowed. There were some men who had been returned three times, without even having time to go and see their families before they were sent back to the battlefields. He became, over the months increasingly disillusioned and irritated with the smug political manoeverings,

[14] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. P.671-673.

and the inability to assess relevant needs and conditions.

Meanwhile, Churchill continued his trench education: Gibb recalls:

"To see Winston giving a dissertation on the laying of sandbags, with practical illustrations, was to come inevitably to the conclusion that his life-study had been purely of poliorketics and the corresponding counter-measures. You felt sure from his grasp of practice that he must have served apprentice to a bricklayer and a master-mason, while his theoretical knowledge rendered you certain that Wren would have been proud to sit at his feet...."

He also became aware of the German supremacy in the air. On January 17 he wrote to Clementine:

"..Airfights have been going on overhead this morning, & I think there has been an air raid on some of the neighbouring townships, as a lot of our machines are up. There is no excuse for our not having command of the air.

"Since I left the Admiralty, the whole naval air wing has been let down: & all our precious ascendancy has been dissipated. If

they had given me control of this service when I left the Admiralty, we shd have supremacy today. Asquith wanted this, but in contact with the slightest difficulty & resistance, he as usual shut up."

Clementine told him of rumours that the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Flying Corps might be formed into a united Air Ministry. Churchill believed he could be the very political figure to unify and vitalize them. As usual, his credentials were excellent - his concern with the Naval air service, his own flying experience, and his administrative ability, and his responsibility for the air defence of Britain at the beginning of the war. But the political intriguing of Asquith, who was determined to keep Lloyd George out of his shoes at all costs, and Lloyd George, who was equally determined to wear them, the wrangling of the Conservatives and the Liberals in the Cabinet, virtually left the war and the men who fought it to get on with it without support. Churchill wanted desperately to get back into the centre of power, and he constantly egged Clementine on to keep in touch with everyone of note, and report back to him with full observations and conversations. While he was in PlugStreet, he seemed to have a fairly clear idea of what would constitute a viable strategy to get back to plenary power, but unfortunately he had a week's leave. He sent Clementine a

careful list of what engagements he would like to do, who he would like to see, which was blown away in a puff of smoke when he got home. Instead, he was instantly caught up in parliamentary excitement. Balfour (First Sea Lord) was to introduce the Navy Estimates, and with the heady encouragement of his friends, which included such partisans as Lord Fisher, Churchill decided to speak in the House of Commons. Fisher was invited to lunch with the Churchills - to Clementine's horror. She alone realized that the bond between Churchill and Fisher was incredibly strong, in spite of Fisher's unreliability. It was not rational, and so could not be reasoned with. At the lunch she is reported to have said to Fisher: "Keep your hands off my husband. You have all but ruined him once. Leave him alone now." Fisher instantly started bombarding Churchill with his Mad Hatter Teaparty notes again.

However, Churchill spoke in the Commons on 7th March, 1916, and he could not have started better or ended worse, if he had tried. He criticized the management of the Navy, and actually got the House to realize that grave blunders of decision and organization were costing the country an immeasurable amount, even may lose the war. The House of Commons listened carefully - he was giving public warning of dangers which no-one had done before. And it was deeply serious. But he blew it all to bits by winding

up his speech with a demand that Lord Fisher return to the Admiralty as First Sea Lord.

Nothing could have been more disastrous. The House questioned his sanity, and he negated all the good he had done by alerting the country to the grave state of the war. Balfour replied to Churchill's speech savagely, and Churchill realized how very naive he had been. He was totally bewildered by the outcry against his speech.

This is a fine example of the feeling responses being ungoverned by the rational responses. He was very surprised to find that he was thought stupid, not magnanimous, to try and demonstrate he had forgiven Fisher. Fisher was the same as ever, unstable, unreliable, turncoat, brilliant, a shaker and a mover, and an unmitigated nuisance when in power, but Churchill conveniently forgot that in the return of the same old chemistry. Anyway, his championing of someone who he had publicly stated had let him down laid him wide open to the most vicious attacks. It shook him badly. He wanted to resign his commission and return to the political arena, although Clementine felt that support and opportunity for him would be negligible. When he returned to the PlugStreet he withdrew his resignation, although he was clamouring to go back into politics. He waited and rebuilt

himself. In May, 1916, the 6th Scots Fusiliers was broken up, and he returned honourably to London to take up his parliamentary career again.

This was a heartbreaking time for him. With his sense of destiny, he felt very strongly that he was capable of prosecuting the war efficiently, decisively, wisely for Great Britain. He now knew the practical side as well as the political side. The press were highly critical of him. He knew that he would never hold government office again while Asquith was Prime Minister. And Asquith showed a truly remarkable ability to remain at No.10 Downing Street. His wife Margot said that nothing less than the Lord God Almighty would ever get Henry out of office. The Conservatives did not want him. In Cabinets and committees, he was such a powerful force that it was difficult to curb him. Bonar Law said that he would far rather have Churchill against him than with him. Churchill was constantly attacked in the House and in the press about the Dardanelles. He realized that in order to resume a political career the part he played in the Dardanelles as First Lord of the Admiralty must be made known. He pressed for publication of the relevant papers. Asquith withdrew his initial consent to this on the grounds that it was not in the interests of the country. Churchill then pressed for an enquiry, and eventually there was enough anti-coalition

support to oblige Asquith to acquiesce. The committee heard all the evidence, Churchill made his case, fully witnessed and supported, but the outcome of the enquiry which was published was so selective that it was largely ineffective. Very little indeed of Churchill's personal evidence was used.

While compiling evidence for his defence to the Dardanelles Committee, Churchill dined with Sir Ian Hamilton, who had commanded the army at Gallipoli until his recall in October 1915. Lord Kitchener had forbidden Hamilton to communicate directly with Churchill, who was then at the Admiralty. He was to communicate with Kitchener only. Now, in June, 1916, Hamilton showed Churchill some 20 telegrams which he had sent to Kitchener, his chief and Secretary of State for War. Churchill was appalled at the evidence of Kitchener's neglect and concealment. The telegrams contained requests for high explosive shells, instead of ineffective shrapnel shells, protests against the holding up of an entire army in Egypt on the pretext that Cairo was threatened by possible attack of Libyan tribesman. Hamilton impressed on Churchill how these appeals "had all been bottled up by K of K and not one had been shown to the Cabinet when he had met them during the campaign and professed to expound the situation." The next day the two men met at Churchill's home to re-check the evidence, when they heard

news vendors calling Kitchener's name. He had been drowned in the North Sea when H.M.S. Hampshire struck a mine on her way home.

England was horrified. Her Hero was lost. There was now question of publishing criticism of Kitchener, he must remain a legend of military skill and wise counsel. "The fact that he should have vanished," Hamilton wrote in his book, "at the very moment Winston and I were making out an unanswerable case against him was one of those coups with which his career was crowded - he was not going to answer!"[15]

Eventually, in December 1916, Asquith could no longer govern. The King asked Bonar Law to form a government, he failed, so Lloyd George was invited to do so. There was no place at all for Churchill, because four of the Conservative ministers in the Coalition Government refused to serve if Churchill was included in the Cabinet.

Churchill believed that he was an effective war leader. His confidence in his abilities was absolute; "strong & vaunted". With such confidence, his failures, such as Dardanelles and Gallipoli, appeared as brash over-exertions of that confidence,

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[15] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III.p.780: this & previous quotation.

his achievements were lost sight of, and he was considered wanting in qualities of judgement and statesmanship.

Churchill did not understand why he was not trusted. He was as honest as he could be in his statements. Clementine, though, realized how far his strident confidence frightened those who worked with him, or whose support he needed. She told him of his faults, but she was the only one close to him who did. Asquith and Lloyd George encouraged and praised him to his face, criticized and censured him behind his back. In her letters, Clementine stressed the danger to his career of the impatience and scorn which he often showed towards those who disagreed with him. She rebuked his tendency to take provocative or unexpected measures without regard to the likely reaction of others. She stressed how much he harmed himself by acting upon ideas which he had not given others time to accept, or which he had failed to explain. She warned him that these weaknesses of character were accentuated by his often brusque and dictatorial manner, and by his overriding impatience. She saw clearly that the ideas which he produced with such extraordinary energy and conviction were seen by others as lacking in judgement; and that the more fiercely he pressed forward with a course of action, the more lacking in perspective he appeared to those colleagues without whose support he could not act.

He wanted to be at the centre of things - this desire was all-consuming, and was seen as vaulting personal ambition. It was a not so much personal ambition as a deep conviction that that was where he should be, with his enormous leadership. He had the necessary qualities in such abundance and was impatient when people could not instantly perceive his paths and motives.

He stayed out of the government until July, 1917, Lloyd George invited him to become Minister of Munitions.

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

PART VI

BACK TO THE CENTRE, 1917 TO 1922

Churchill finally went back into the Government as Minister of Munitions in July, 1917. Dr. Addison was willing to hand it over. Lord Rothermere wrote to Lloyd George suggesting that Winston went to the Air Board, because of his driving power, knowledge and energy. Lloyd George, he said, alone could control him, and it was a pity if the Government lost the use of his energy. Lords Curzon and Derby hated the idea and protested strongly. However, eventually, Churchill went to the Ministry of Munitions. His aunt Cornelia wrote to congratulate and warn him: "My advice is to stick to munitions and don't try & run the Govt.!"[1]

Dr Addison did his best to make things easy and welcome for Churchill, but was not sure that he succeeded. One of his staff recalled Churchill's first meeting:
Those who attended from the secretariat fully expected a stormy scene. When the company was assembled Winston arrived, was

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[1] Martin Gilbert: Vol.IV. P.30.

received rather coldly and opened by stating that he perceived that "he started at scratch in the popularity stakes". He went on boldly to indicate his policy and to outline his proposals for an even swifter production of munitions. As he elaborated his plans the atmosphere changed perceptibly. This was not an apology. It was a challenge. Those who came to curse remained to cheer. The courage and eloquence of the new minister dispelled disaffection and the minister took up his task with a willing staff. It was a personal triumph at a critical juncture. [2]

Very soon, as usual, Churchill mastered the workings of the making of munitions. He completely re-organised the Ministry for greater efficiency and speedier decision making. His first plan wasted too much time with unnecessarily long large meetings, and he re-arranged them far more selectively.

On the same day that he officially took his seat as Minister in the House, he took the initiative in solving a labour dispute which had begun 18 months before. In the Clyde district Beardmore's Munitions Works had experienced a series of strikes, work was at a standstill, and the strikers had been forbidden to return to work and deported from Glasgow, where they lived. They demanded to be allowed to return, and to continue to work in

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[2] Harold Bellman, Cornish Cockney, 1947.

the munition factories. Three previous ministers, Lloyd George, Edwin Montagu and Dr. Addison, had refused. Churchill sent his Chief Labour Adviser, Sir Thomas Munro, to see Sir William Beardmore, ..to explain to him that he thought it better to let the men back to work without raising conditions or a fuss. If they only wanted to redress political grievances, it would soon become apparent in their work. Sir William refused this overture.

But Churchill did not give up easily, and the next week he saw David Kirkwood, the ring-leader of the deportees. It is interesting to read Kirkwood's account of the meeting, and of how Churchill handled it.

I had formed an opinion of Winston Churchill as a daring, reckless, swash-buckler individual who was afraid of no one... I expected arrogance, military precision, abruptness. When he appeared, I knew I was wrong. He came in, his fresh face all smiles, and greeted me simply, without a trace of side or trappings. I felt I had found a friend.

"How do you do, Mr. Kirkwood? I have heard a good deal about you,:" he said.
"I dare say you have," I replied.

"Yes, and I want you to know that, whatever happens, nothing is to be allowed to stand in the way of the production of the munitions of war."

"Quite right," I said.

Then he rang a bell, saying: "Let's have a cup of tea and a bit of cake together."

What a difference so small a thing can make! ... Here was the man, supposed never to think of trifles, suggesting tea and cake -a sort of bread and salt of friendship. It was magnificent. We debated over the teacups.

"Well, what about it?" he asked.

"I will tell you," I replied. "The Government deported me without cause. I have had redress for those wrongs. I realize that what was done to me was done because we were at war. 'I waive the quantum o'the sin'" - at which he screwed up his face "but I am unemployed. I am a highly skilled engineer, idle since May. I want you to put me back in Beardmore's whether Beardmore wants me or not."

I have seldom seen a man look so astonished. His brows came down. He looked at me and said:

"Look here, Kirkwood, you have a great reputation, but you are

not living up to it. I expected you to be a reasonable man. You are the most unreasonable man I ever met in my whole life. Here am I, three weeks in my job, and you ask me to put you back in Beardmore's whether he wants you or not, into the Works he has built up over a lifetime."

"Yes, that is so," I said. "It may seem a strange request. I've told you I have forgiven all that was done to me, but this is doing it all over again. I am treated as if I was a traitor to my country. There is no worse injury could be done to a Scotsman. You have got to do this thing or I'll go out from here and from the Isle of Wight to John o'Groats I'll advocate a down-tool policy..."

He whipped round with flashing eyes: "You must not mention that here, Kirkwood. I will not tolerate it. Remember you are in the Ministry of Munitions."
"I would say it, Mr. Churchill, were it in the Court of Heaven, and not only say it sir, but I'm going to do it."

He sat back in his chair, looked staight into my eyes and roared with laughter. Then he said:

"By Jove, and I believe you would! But there's no good in

getting heated about it. You feel wronged and only one thing can change that feeling. Well, why not? Let us see what we can do in the next two or three days, and it won't be my fault if you are not back in Beardmore's." [3]

Kirkwood was offered the job of manager at the Beardmore's Mile End Shell factory three days later. Within six weeks shell production at the Mile-End factory was the highest in Britain, because of a bonus scheme devised by Kirkwood.

From then on, in true Churchillian fashion, he gave attention to all matters remotely within his orbit. Overtime ("I am in priciple strongly opposed to Sunday work, except in emergencies. It usually results in workmen receiving double wages for working on Sunday, and taking Monday off!") Pay for labourers, (We cannot win this War unless we are supported by the great masses of the labouring classes of this country."), a welfare and first aid handbook was ordered from his chief medical adviser, short, simple, practical and plenty of spacing. And he asked his statistical adviser, Walter Layton, about the Tank programme.

How many tanks, and of what patterns, are to be ready month by

[3] David Kirkwood: My Life of Revolt, 1935.

month for the next 12 months? by whom, and to what extent, have these programmes been approved? How much steel do they require? How much do they cost? How much labour skilled and unskilled do they require in these 12 months? What are the principal limiting factors in material and class of labour? Apart from the number of Tanks, what quantity of spares, and what maintenance plant are required? Give the money value or weights of materials or proportion of labour required or whichever of the three is the most convenient and representative. Let me know the number of people in the Tank Department, the principal salaries paid, and the aggregate of salaries paid per annnum. Show particularly any part of Tank production which overlaps aeroplane production, i.e. any transferable margin, whether of skilled mechanics of ball bearings, etc. in which these two branches of production are clashing competitors. Show also the proportion of steel, of money and of skilled and unskilled labour proposed to be absorbed in Tank production in these 12 months compared with the general Budget of the Ministry. .....I shall be quite content if many of these figures are approximate only.[4]

As usual, with a new job, whatever it is, within two or three weeks he grasped it throroughly, re-organised where necessary, got everyone behind him, and was in general up and running. The

[4] Martin Gilbert: Vol.IV. P.38.

Conservatives, as ever, were very worried indeed that he would interfere in everyone else's spheres in a very short time indeed. In September, Churchill wrote to Lloyd George: "This is a very heavy Department, almost as interesting as the Admiralty, with the enormous advantage that one has neither got to fight Admirals or Huns! I am delighted with all these clever business men who are helping me to their utmost. It is very pleasant to work with competent people." [5]

The War limped along. In October 1917 The Italian Army was defeated by the German and Austrian armies at Paschendaele. Five French and five English divisions were rushed to hold the Germans at bay while the Italian army re-organised and got new supplies. This placed a great strain on Munitions. In November, Churchill was casting about for supplies of iron for his steel. He supposed there were 20,000 tons of steel in the Hyde Park railings, in fact what about ALL railings? Construction steel could be re-directed towards military purposes. And the shell-steel lying on the battle fields - there must be 700,000 to 800,000 tons lying about on the Somme battle field alone.

The fertility of the man's mind is infinite.

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[5] Martin Gilbert: Vol.IV. P.44.

He did not forget the idea of the Tank. At the Battle of Cambrai, November 1917, 42 square miles had been gained in a week, 10,000 men killed, 36,000 tons of shells, it had cost 6,600,000 pounds. In Flanders, from August to November, 54 square miles had been gained, 300,000 men killed, and 84,000,000 was spent on ammunition, 465,000 tons of it. Later, in the World Crisis, he wrote: "Accusing as I do without exception all the great ally offensives of 1915, 1916 and 1917, as needless and wrongly conceived operations of infinite cost, I am bound to reply to the question, What else could be done? and I answer it, pointing to the Battle of Cambrai, "This could have been done". This in many variants, this in larger and better forms ought to have been done, and would have been done if only the Generals had not been content to fight machine-gun bullets with breasts of gallant men, and think that that was waging war." But at this time, the Generals were still of the opinion that more infantry were needed, and not an untried mechanical invention.

In 1917, Russia withdrew from the war. She was formerly an ally of France and Great Britain, until the Bolshevists had taken over Moscow. England had abandoned the Dardanelles by this stage, and with the Russian Front needing negligible attention, the Germans had only one tough front to fight - that with France.

Churchill travelled regularly to France, to discuss with the French what and how much ammunition and supplies they needed, to be on hand as a sort of liaison between the French and the English, and also to stiffen the morale of the French. He had this great capacity to put heart into men, to turn despair around. He made so many journeys that eventually the Chateau Verchocq became his headquarters in France, and he flew in and out, a daring operation in those days. There are many anecdotes about this time, the chief one being when he led Clemenceau, the French Prime Minister, into the centre of the battle, very close indeed to the exploding shells. Which, of course, they both enjoyed.

Churchill enjoyed Siegfried Sassoon's anti-war poetry, and recited it at dinner on occasions. Sassoon was a friend of Private Secretary Eddie Marsh, and he arranged a meeting between Sassoon and Churchill. Sassoon wrote later:

Nevertheless he was making me feel that I should like to have him as my company commander in the front line, and under the influence of his candid geniality I was discarding shyness and well on the way towards behaving as my ordinary self. There came a point, however, when our proceedings developed into a monologue. Pacing the room with a bit cigar in the corner of his

mouth, he gave me an emphatic vindication of militarism as an instrument of policy and stimulator of glorious individual achievements, not only in the mechanism of warfare but in spheres of social progress. The present war, he asserted, had brought about inventive discoveries which would ameliorate the condition of mankind. For example, there had been immense improvement in sanitation.....

He now spoke with weighty eloquence of what the Ministry was performing in its vast organisation and output, and what it might yet further achieve in expediting the destruction of the enemy. IN love with his theme, he was elaborating a full-bodied paragraph when the secretarial countenance of Eddie appeared in the doorway to the ante-room, announcing that Lord Fisher had arrived. But the information went unheeded. The Winstonian exposition continued until Eddie reappeared with an apologetic intimation that Lord Fisher was growing restive. As I went out I was introduced to the famous Admiral - a small man with a queer mongolian face, who had obviously come there with lots to say...

Had he been entirely serious, I wondered, when he said that "war is the normal occupation of man"? He had indeed qualified the statement by adding "War - and gardening". But it had been

unmistakable that for him war was the finest activity on earth.[6] It is possible that Churchill saw things in terms of battle. He even phrased post-war policy in the language of battle, he was always "going into action", driving gallant troops, standing fast, etc. in ordinary life. Every hour was the hour of fate for him. Except possibly when he was painting. He saw politics in terms of war:

"Politics are almost as exciting as war and quite as dangerous, although in war you can be killed only once, in politics many times." [7]

Churchill stayed at the Ministry of Munitions until the war ended on November 11, 1918, sixteen months. Even before the Armistice, Lloyd George was planning his government for afterwards. Churchill decided to back Lloyd George, after Lloyd George skillfully "landed his fish", i.e. Churchill, by promising him an important place in the new Government. Lloyd George called a general election, and the Honourable Member for Oldham was returned to Parliament, but not without exerting himself, which he did, in Dundee on 27th November:

"The Choice is in our own hands. Like the Israelites of old,

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[6] Siegfried Sassoon: Siegfried's Journey, 1945.

[7] Sproat & Sykes: Wit of Sir Winston: P.23.

blessing and cursing is set before us. Today we can have the greatest failures or the greatest triumph - as we choose. There is enough for all. The earth is a generous mother. Never, never did science offer such fairy gifts to man. Never did their knowledge and organisation stand so high. Repair the waste. Rebuild the ruins. Heal the wounds. Crown the victors. Comfort the broken and broken-hearted. There is the battle we have now to fight. There is the victory we have now to win. Let us go forward together."

In another election speech he declared the Government had decided to nationalize the railways.

Lloyd George formed the new government, and appointed Churchill as Secretary of State for War, and Secretary of State for Air. Churchill was faced with the problems of demobilisation. At the time of the armistice there were nearly three and a half million British soldiers under arms. The armistice was November, and the new government was formed in January. The men were kicking their heels for six odd weeks, and over the Christmas period. If a man was offered an industrial job, he could come home, even if he had only been in the army for very few months. For at least three million men, even if they had served for the full duration, there was no prospect of getting home. There

were widespread demonstrations against this policy. The army was very unhappy indeed. Churchill began immediately to call meetings between the generals (an Army of Occupation was needed- how was this to be fairly constructed and selected?) and set about implementing suggestions as quickly as possible. "The release of the men not needed must appeal to a sense of justice and fair play. If anyone has to stay, it must be those who are not the oldest, not those who came the earliest, not those who have suffered the most."
Demobilisation needed extremely quick and urgent attention, or the entire army's discipline would break down, which would mean no army, no force to hold the peace, and three and a half million men roaming discontentedly round a comparatively small area. The potential chaos was unthinkable.

Lloyd George was in Paris at the Peace talks. Therefore Churchill's primary research and plans were necessarily done without frequent meetings with Lloyd George. He of course spoke to all concerned, including the Exchequer (now held by Austen Chamberlain), and sent the whole proposal over to Lloyd George by air. Unfortunately conditions were so bad that the aeroplane could not get to Paris, and Lloyd George became offended at not being consulted. He wrote Churchill a stern rebuke. Churchill replied that of course Lloyd George was being consulted, but that

the report delayed by weather was "being put before him in the most convenient form and with preliminary difficulties swept away." However, Churchill went to Paris, Lloyd George agreed to the proposals, they were taken back to England, the Press was informed, the army seemed happy with the plans and demobilisation started.

There was, however, a very serious incident in Calais. On January 30th, 1919, 5,000 British troops who had just arrived from England demanded to be sent back at once. "Their attitude was threatening, insubordinate & mutinous." wrote General Haig to Churchill. Haig had had the mutinous camp surrounded by two loyal divisions, complete with machine guns and fixed bayonets, and orders to bring the mutiny to an end. The divisions marched into the camp, isolated the mutineers at one end, and arrested the three ring-leaders. The mutinous troops were despatched to their divisions round France and occupied Germany, but Haig wanted the three ringleaders to suffer "the supreme penalty." Otherwise, he said, the discipline of the whole Army would suffer, and for many years to come.

Churchill did not agree. He telegraphed: Unles there was serious violence attended by bloodshed or actual loss of life, I do not consider that the infliction of the death penalty would be

justifiable. ....The death penalty should be used only under what may be called life and death conditions, and public opinion will only support it when other men's lives are endangered by criminal or cowardly conduct." Haig resented Churchill's intervention. He wrote in his diary "I have power by Warrant to try by Court Martial and shoot in accordance with Army Act. and no telegram from S of S can affect my right to do what I think is necessary for the Army." But fortunately no death sentences were passed on the Calais mutineers.

On October 17, 1919, Churchill announced in the House of Commons that the demobilization scheme was completed. Since the Armistice 10,000 men a day had been discharged, reducing the daily cost from four million pounds to one and a quarter million pounds. "It was true to say, he said, that the Army had melted away." [8]

Meanwhile, Churchill did not neglect the embryo air ministry. There was criticism of his holding two offices at once. The Times asked: But can any single man cover the huge span of both these Departments of the Army and the Air? We gravely doubt it... The Air Ministry will demand the constant exercise of a keen and fresh imagination. The future greatness of the country

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[8] Martin Gilbert: Vol.IV. P.196.

depends in no small measure on this imaginative divination of the future of air power; there are a mass of legal questions to settle and detailed regulations to draw up; and, besides all this, there is the enormously important commercial side of aviation. One horse, one man: we doubt even Mr. Churchill's ability to ride two at once, especially two such high-spirited and mettlesome creatures."[9]

"The Air Force is the arm wh stands alone & midway between the land & sea services. Where they clash, it rules. Given superior thinking power & knowledge it must obtain the primary place in the general conception of war policy," he wrote in an inter-departmental note.

Churchill appointed Sir Hugh Trenchard as Chief of the Air Staff to reorganise the Royal Air Force for the future and carry out the demobilisation, etc. Sir Hugh's ideas were militarily orientated, which suited Churchill very well. In fact, Sir Frederick Sykes strongly disagreed with this, he wanted civil aviation given high priority. There was some in-fighting between the Army and the Navy who both wanted the new force under their respective auspices, but that came to nothing and the Air Force came into its own. Trenchard was obviously ill, exhausted and

[9] The Times: January 14. 1919. Gilbert: VI.194.

unfit for work, and he offered to resign as Chief of Air Staff. Churchill refused his resignation, gave him extended leave, and when he returned he stayed for ten years, until 1929, setting the R.A.F. firmly on independent feet. Poor Sykes struggled to get civil aviation going, indeed Britain lagged horribly behind. But with a Minister for Air who was doing two jobs and always more interested in fighting abilities, and a Chancellor of Exchequer who was extraordinarily economy minded, Sykes fought an uphill battle for years.

Churchill decided to start flying himself again, with a view to getting his pilot's licence. He had a crash landing at Buc aerodrome near Paris in June 1919, and a month later at Croydon something went wrong with his controls just after take off, and he told his instructor that the machine was out of control. The instructor instantly took over, but they were too close to the ground and going too slowly to avoid a crash. Churchill recalled later:

"But there was no time now. I saw the sunlit aerodrome close beneath me, and the impression flashed through my mind that it was bathed in a baleful yellowish glare. Then in another flash a definite thought formed in my brain, "This is very likely Death". And swift upon that I felt again in imagination the exact

sensations of my smash on the Buc Aerodrome a month before. Something like that was going to happen NOW!...

"The aeroplane was just turning from its side-slip into the nose dive when it struck the ground at perhaps fifty miles an hour with terrific force. Its left wing crumpled, and its propeller and nose plunged into the earth. Again I felt myself driving forward as if in some new dimension by a frightful and overwhelming force, through a space I could not measure."[10]

He was saved by his seat belt, and the excellence of his instructor, who had switched off the engine just before they crashed, and so minimising the chances of the airplane catching fire. Both he and the instructor were largely uninjured, and two hours later Churchill presided at a dinner at the House of Commons, making a speech of welcome. After these incidences, he was persuaded to give up getting his pilot's licence.

Throughout 1920, Churchill accepted Trenchard's policies and plans without dissent. He saw the Air Force as a primary and independent arm with a national role to play, not an adjunct to the Army or Navy. He wrote: "No nation would attempt such a task as an oversea invasion in the face of superior air forces

[10] Thoughts & Adventures: Churchill. Gilbert: IV:210.

capable of interfering with its vital communications."

Churchill gave up the Air Ministry on 1st April, 1921.

Meanwhile, Churchill was mainly occupied with Russia and her fate under the Boshevists. British policy towards the Bolshevists was evolved without Churchill's participation - he had been in the trenches and then waiting on the sidelines during the overthrow and murder of the Tsar and his family, Russia's peace with Germany and withdrawal from the War, and the emergence of the Bolshevik power in Moscow. In December, 1917, the War Cabinet had decided to pay any anti-Bolshevik Russians such money as they required "for the purpose of maintaining alive in South-East Russia the resistance to the Central Powers". The money would be paid as long as the struggle continued. Clemenceau pressured the War Cabinet to agree that the French should direct all Allied activity against the Bolsheviks in the Ukraine, and the British were allotted the Armenian, Cosack and Caucasian regions "as the Britsh sphere" of anti-Bolshevik activity (the Convention of December 1917).

For the whole of 1918 and until October 1919, anti-Bolshevik armies in Russia fought the rising tide of Bolshevism. There were British troops in the North Sea, at Murmansk and Archangel.

The Finns, the Baltic States and White-Russian Yudenitch were close to Petrograd, running South were the Poles, the French, the White Ukranians. Between the Black and the Caspian Sea, Caucasia, General Denikin and his Cossacks were supported by the British. East of the Volga the Don Cossacks were fighting, North of them was General Kolchak, straddling the Urals and the Trans-Siberian Railway, of which a very long section was held by Checks, for the anti-Bolsheviks. Americans and British Canadians held Vladivostok, and to the North the Japanese held a section of the railway line.

Churchill was an implacable enemy of Bolshevism. In a speech to his constituents at Dundee in November, he declared:

Russia is being rapidly reduced by the Bolsheviks to an animal form of Barbarism. The cost of living has multiplied 37 times. ...Civil war is proceeding in all directions. ...Work of all kinds is at a standstill. The peasaants are hoarding their grain. The towns and cities only keep themselves alive by pillaging the surrounding country. We must expect that enormous numbers .. ..will die of starvation during the winter. Civilisation is being completely extinguished over gigantic areas, while Bolsheviks hop and caper like troops of ferocious baboons amid the ruins of cities and the corpses of their

victims.

He threw his weight solidly behind the anti-Bolshevik forces, and did whatever he could to encourage and support them. At the Paris Peace conference he was all for negotiation to secure a peace settlement without fighting. But there was no chance of securing such a settlement unless it was known that the Allies had the power and the will to enforce their views. In his view, Bolshevism in Russia represented a mere fraction of the population, and would be exposed and swept away by a General Election held under Allied auspices.

Lloyd George was opposed to using Allied troops either to destroy Bolshevism or to force the Russians to negotiate with each other. The farthest he was prepared to go was to help those border States in the Baltic and Caucasus which were struggling to be independent from Russia, and which contained non-Russian majorities. Subsequently Lloyd George insisted that no troops were to be sent to Russia, but aid in the form of arms and ammunition and supplies might be sent. He wanted to meet with the Bolsheviks at Prinkipo, and conciliate with them. Churchill told Lloyd George - while the latter was shaving - that one might as well legalize sodomy as recognize the Bolsheviks. They came away from the Paris conference with no allied policy

regarding Russia, and a failed Prinkipo meeting - the Bolsheviks didn't bother to attend.

Churchill went home, accepting Lloyd George's reluctance to become involved in Russia, and arranging the withdrawal of British troops from Murmansk and Archangel in the spring, when the ice thawed. But he warned again and again about the dangers of Russia and her satellite states falling under a Bolshevist regime. It was his personal belief that they ought to intervene, but to do so they would require at least a million troops, and even Churchill saw that that would be an impossible task in view of the recent end of World War I.

Churchill and Sir Henry Wilson went over to Paris again, for a conference at which the Americans were present too. Churchill tried very hard to get a clear cut Russian policy instituted, but failed. President Wilson was losing troops in Russia, but if they were withdrawn, even more Russians would be killed. Some day, however, the troops would have to be withdrawn. Churchill tried to get some form of commitment on "arming the anti-Bolshevik forces in Russia." Again, President Wilson ducked it, saying that he would cast in his lot with the rest. A few hours later he returned to America.

Lloyd George in London, meanwhile, was getting extremely agitated at what he thought Churchill was committing him - and his government - to in terms of war, armies, arms and ammunition. He sent a peevish wire to Churchill saying war against the Bolsheviks was impossible, the country wouldn't stand it, he was very much alarmed at Churchill's telegrams. Relations between Lloyd George and Churchill very nearly broke on the question of Russia. Lloyd George sent copies of his telegrams to the American delegates left at the conference, and so Churchill was angry, upset, and hamstrung. In his report to Lloyd George:

You are therefore committed at some date in the near future to receiving an informal document embodying certain military opinions bearing upon Russia. You are committed to nothing else.

Not a very satisfactory output for over a week of discussions.

But he continued to voice his opinion that Bolshevism was evil, and that it should be stopped, and to pray (publicly) that Russia would be saved. But equally, he always felt that Russia must be saved by the Russians, even though the Allies could contribute materially to their cause.

"With regard to Russia, you speak of my "Russian policy." wrote

Churchill angrily to Lloyd George, a letter which he subsequently did not send. "I have no Russian policy. I know of no Russian policy. I went to Paris to look for a Russian policy. I deplore the lack of a Russian policy, which lack may well keep the world at war for an indefinite period and involve the Peace Conference and the League of Nations in a common failure." [11] He went on to enumerate what troops (and small ships on the inland puddle of the Caspian Sea) were in the field, and why. He had not changed or ignored Cabinet policies at all, he had obeyed them to the letter. And on March 4, when the Cabinet decided to evacuate Murmansk and Archangel, he started to organise it at once. Evacuating the Caucasus was discussed, and Churchill said he was interested in fighting the Russians through Denikin, that munitions and arms should be sent to him. He also remarked that he personally would very much like to annex the Caspian, if there was any prospect of Britain keeping it permanently.

Churchill was seen by the press and public as a vigorous anti-Bolshevist. He did all he could to encourage the White Russian Generals to destroy Bolshevism. General Denikin marched to within 200 miles of Moscow, General Kolchak approached from the East, and General Yudenitch nearly took Petrograd. The Anti-bolsheviks came very close to beating the Bolsheviks. However, there was the danger of "grave excesses" being committed by

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[11] Martin Gilbert: Vol.IV. p.259.

victorious troops. There was also the disturbing habit of General Denikin to murder Jews when he came across them. Churchill kept in close touch with the British Generals urging them "You should press for a fair public trial of all culprits and stringent orders against terrorism and indicriminate shooting. In view of the prominent part taken by Jews in Red terror and regime there is special danger of Jew progroms and this danger must be combatted strongly." The Russian troops themselves were treacherous to say the least. Kolchak lost an entire Ukranian regiment which murdered its officers and went over to the other side. The Don Cossacks later changed sides in mid campaign, which of course, was decisive in Denikin's failure. General Rawlinson said of the White Russians: "Their troops won't fight alone and their officers are hopeless.... The trouble with the White Russians is that they have no real leaders of character and determination, and their subordinates are a hopeless lot... The Bolos, on the other hand, know what they want, and are working hard to get it." Another British general had had 15 Russian ring-leaders shot for murdering three of their own officers, but that was after a court martial.

Churchill was looking at the effects Bolshevism would have world-wide, long term, and he did not see a happy picture. On August 23, 1919, he wrote to A.J. Balfour:

The ruin of Lenin and Trotsky and the system they embody is indispensable to the peace and revival of the world. Whether it will be achieved or not I cannot tell; but we are not far from it at the present moment and any concentration of anti-Bolshevik forces in the Baltic States, or the dethronement of Bela Kun at Budapest, or a junction between the Romanian armies and Denikin's forces advancing into the Ukraine, are all in their way extremely important and hopeful factors towards the decision we are seeking.

Paderewski, the Polish pianist and composer, had raised 500 000 men to fight the Bolsheviks. He tried to persuade the Allied Powers to authorise and support an advance on Moscow. Churchill and Wilson did not think this at all a good idea. "If anything could combine all Russia into one whole, it would be a march of the Poles on Moscow. I can almost conceive Denikin and Lenin joining hands to defeat such an object," Wilson wrote to Churchill.

Churchill continued to report and chivvy and ask for assistance for Kolchak, until he failed, and then for Denikin. In September he wrote a 5,000 word memorandum entitled "Russian Policy", and circulated it to the Cabinet including Lloyd George. Lloyd

George blew up. He wanted everyone to concentrate on England's problems, economic, internal, Irish, labour, expenditure, and Churchill was preoccupied with Russia.

Churchill replied with dignity, and a certain snap. He pointed out that he had "to restore an army from mutiny to contentment, to dissolve an immense army, to create a new voluntary army, & all the time to meet the many and varying demands for disciplined troops at home & in foreign theatres. I am sure you wd have some better means of recognising what has been achieved than you used this afternoon.....

My part in this has been to wind up these commitments if possible without dishonour: & in this I have made no proposal for military operations to you or to the Cabinet except those wh the General Staff recommended as essential to the safe withdrawal of the troops. The Chief of the Staff has been at yr side not at mine during the greater part of these anxious months.

It is not correct to say Kotlas "has failed". It was never attempted.... I do not think it is fair to represent operations thus demanded by military men of yr. own choosing, as if they were so many sugar plums given to please me.

It was however the purpose of my letter to wh you have so fully & patiently replied to try to impress upon you the realisation I have of the intense & horrible situation in Russia & of its

profound influence upon all our affairs. I may get rid of my "Obsession" or you may get rid of me: but you will not get rid of Russia: nor of the consequences of a policy wh for nearly a year it has been impossible to define. I must confess I cannot feel a sense of detachment from their tragical scene.....
With half the world in disorder and its problems on yr shoulders I can understand that it all seems fairly small to you. But right up against it as I am - as I have been put by you - I cannot help feeling a most dreadful & ever present sense of responsiblity. Am I wrong? How easy for me to shrug my shoulders a & say it is on the Cabinet, or on the Paris Conference. I cannot do it. I feel an earnest desire to appeal to the nation regardless of the unthinking opinion...." [12]

On November 6, the House of Commons debated the Russian situation. Denikin's treatment of Jews was bitterly aired, and so was the cruelty of the Bolsheviks. Churchill defended his policy. He said the "Bolshevik ideal was no less than world-wide revolution. He denounced Lenin as the tool of the Germans:

"Lenin was sent into Russia by the Germans in the same way that you might send a phial cntaining a culture of typhoid or of cholera to be poured into the water supply of a great city, and

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[12] Martin Gilbert: Vol.IV. P.334.

finally collapsed. Lord Curzon "welcomed its disappearance", and got a stinging reply from Churchill. This "welcome" collapse, he said, will enable the Bolshevik troops defending Petrograd to be transferred to the south to fight Denikin, where England had supplied 2000 officers and men. "It is just this idea of war in compartments that has been fatal to the military situation. The whole front is one, and the withdrawal of pressure from any part increases the difficulties of every other part. It seems to me that you are likely in the near future to have further causes of satisfaction of this character afforded you," wrote Churchill to Curzon. He was right. One after the other, the White Russian Generals failed, and their armies were dispersed - many officers and men (and their families) were hunted down and murdered. There was another conference in Paris, and it was more or less agreed to let Russia stew in her own juice. Churchill felt isolated, angry and defeated, but he accepted it. He was attacked by a newspaper who favoured Lloyd George, and decided to reply in the Illustrated Sunday Herald. He called the article "The Red Fever".

"The Bolshevist is not an idealist who is content to promote his cause by argument or example. At the first favourable opportunity he helps it foward by the bullet or the bomb. The essence of Bolshevism as opposed to many other forms of visionary

political thought, is that it can only be propagated and maintained by violence." He said that the disdain which Lenin and Trotsky felt for the masses of Russia was far greater than that felt by any of the Tsars. And he proposed:

"Instead of wrecking a score of great States and squandering in a single convulsion the capital which mankind has acquired in long, blind ages of slow improvement, the Bolsheviks should be collected and segregated into a country - we beg their pardon, into an area of the earth's surface, which they can really call their own.

"In some region sufficiently wide to accommodate their numbers, and sufficiently productive to support their existence, the devotees of Jacobinism (or Bolshevism as it is now called) should be given their chance to put their theories into the fullest application against one another. There, with no peasants or workmen to mislead or oppress, with no middle classes to starve, or princes to butcher, with no toiling millions to exploit, and with no glittering civilisation to pillage, the apostles of Lenin and Liebknecht, the successors of Robespierre and Marat, might enjoy themselves among the massacres of a bloodier September and the rigours of an unnatural equality....." [14]

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[14] Martin Gilbert: Vol.IV. P.375.

Winston Churchill carried on his public career - he was concerned in the worsening situation of Ireland, the Turkish question, creating the Middle East Department at the Colonial office, and the formation of Israel. He seems to move through important and far-reaching situations with a combination of enthusiasm, vision and eddies of upset and criticism.

He was deeply disturbed by the collapse of settled values, ancient institutions, civilisations. He was told of the new creed that children were taught in Russia:

"I love Lenin,
Lenin was poor, therefore I love poverty,
Lenin went hungry, therefore I can go hungry.
Lenin was often cold, therefore I shall not ask for warmth."

Winston Churchill growled: "Christianity with a tomahawk!".[15]

In his election speech on November 11, 1922, he set out his thoughts:

"What a disappointment the Twentieth Century has been
How terrible & how melancholy
is long series of disastrous events

[15] Sproat & Sykes: Wit of Sir Winston: P.24.

wh have darkened its first 20 years.
We have seen in ev country a dissolution,
a weakening of those bonds,
a challenge to those principles
a decay of faith
an abridgement of hope
on wh structure & ultimate existence
of civilized society depends.
We have seen in ev part of globe
one gt country after another
wh had erected an orderly, a peaceful
a prosperous structure of civilised society,
relapsing in hideous succession
into bankruptcy, barbarism or anarchy.

China & Mexico were in turmoil, Russia run by a "little set of communist criminals", Egypt and India, all struggling, and he went on:

Can you doubt, my faithful friends
as you survey this sombre panaorama,
that Mankind is passing through a period marked
not only by an enormous destruction
& abridgement of human species,

not only by a vast impoverishment
& reduction in means of existence
but also that destructive tendencies
have not yet run their course?
And only intense, concerted & prolonged efforts
among all nations
can avert further & perhaps even greater calamities.

Churchill saw the world slipping slowly into anarchy. He saw value systems of honour, courage, altruism being stamped out by malign orders. Civilisation was, to these malign orders, a curse, something to be scorned and destroyed. Churchill saw it as Man's priceless achievement, a creative effort to overcome primitive fears and primal screams, and an intelligent effort for man to think for himself, to stand on his own feet. The distillations of these efforts, in Churchill's value system, lay fundamentally in honour, courage, truth, loyal service, hard work and earned achievement. Above all, he believed in the fundamental sovereignty of the individual. Tyrannies were evils which should be destroyed - he did his best to destroy the Bolshevik tyranny, and he did destroy the Nazi tyranny.

Churchill had no qualms whatever about enjoying other fruits of

civilisation. He enjoyed good society, beautiful homes, good food, (Clementine kept an excellent table on a low budget) he loved champagne, cigars and his whiskey consumption was legendary. He thoroughly enjoyed the cinema and the company of actors - in fact it is astonishing what an enormous acquaintance he had, world wide. He even met Einstein, who said that he was a wise man.

Churchill is the biggest of the case studies. As will be noticed, I have stopped at the year 1920, well before his "wilderness" years, and before he became Prime Minister for the Second World War. His work capacity was such that his output is probably one of the biggest ever achieved by one man, and being a "hands on" man, it is all of an intensely practical and high-profile nature. He did not retire to think great thoughts, or produce complicated philosophies, like Einstein and Smuts, or Bach or Leonardo. He was in the thick of the global human dilemma, sleeves rolled up and churning away. There is enough material here already to try and determine his relationship with life. His character is by now set, and to further study his mode of engagement through the Wilderness years and the Second World War would make his case at least twice as long.

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

CONCLUSION.

Churchill's relationship with the religion of his time was easy and peripheral. His overt religion was a consequence of birth- his family were Anglican, the Anglican Church was part of the overall constitution of England, on a level with the Judiciary, the Houses of Parliament, the Monarchy, and the Military services. Bishops and Archbishops were in the House of Lords, as were senior judges, and retired and illustrious Admirals and Generals. The institutions in England are inextricably interwoven. He took his Anglicanism for granted. He acquired from Nanny Everest a deep distrust of "Popery", which led to one of his early ideological stands - he refused to turn and face East when reciting the Creed at Junior School Chapel, age 10. He was out-manoeuvred by his teachers, who quietly saw that he was in a pew facing East anyway. Otherwise religious observance was part of the curriculum and totally normal. In Churchill's mind, church remained part of the structure, a bit of valuable tradition, embodying a facet of the history, achievement and unique art of his beloved island race. In Cumpsty's Theory of Religion, Churchill is an excellent example of the Secular World Affirming type, in that he engaged comprehensively in the secular

world, being quite comfortable with a transcendent God, distanced, benevolent, but who left him free to deal with the world as he saw fit.

[1.ii.] Theology, or dogma, was a different matter. As a very young man in the Indian Army, he read voraciously. He read Gibbons, Macaulay, Plato, Socrates, and, what his commanding officer read, Winwood Reade. Winwood Reade wrote "a concise and well-written universal history of mankind, dealing in harsh terms with the mysteries of all religions and leading to the depressing conclusion that we simply go out like candles." Churchill, with his strong sense of destiny, grappled with this, angrily and with a sense of betrayal. As he said, it might have made him a nuisance. His problem was resolved when he realized that he "did not hesitate to ask for special protection when about to come under the fire of the enemy: nor to feel sincerely grateful when I got home safe to tea." (Another undeniably English security!) His practice was natural, and as real as the reasoning process which sharply contradicted it. "Moreover the practice was comforting and the reasoning led nowhere. I therefore acted in accordance with my feelings without troubling to square such conduct with the conclusions of thought." It seemed to him silly to discard the reasons of the heart for those

of the head.[1]

Churchill is much *"bigger"* in every faculty except the physical than his contemporaries. His capacities were enormous, for work, leadership and organization, breadth and depth of vision, for play, for writing, study, for feeling, (he was almost medieval in his romanticism), his optimism, his depressions, his ability to take criticism, for friendship, his memory, intelligence and vision, his humour, and above all, his self confidence. His powers *of conceptualizing his sense of reality* in these matters were equal to the task. He was impatient with Lloyd George and Balfour because they could not encompass several great matters at once, and perceive possible effects of one upon the other - for example he failed to convince Lloyd George that the Bolshevik revolution in Russia would have extraordinarily serious consequences for the whole world. He found it frustrating when his friends did not understand his vision, and even more frustrating when they tried to hoodwink him. It was difficult to lie to Churchill. His courage was legendary. He was never afraid, for example, to go into the House of Commons to do battle, to fight or defend, or to put his political life on the line. "In the theatre of his (Churchill's) mind it is always

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[1] My Early Life: 1930: p. 129-130.

the hour of fate and the crack of doom," said A.P. Gardiner.[2]

[1.i].

His specific talents would appear to be an excellent memory, writing and speaking beautiful English, oratory, acting (the worse the situation was, the more brilliant was his performance), and a gift for seeing situations whole, present and future, whether global, international or national. [1.i.i.]

Churchill's *talent for expression* was excellent. He operated at a very practical level, and his ability with language was more than adequate to achieve his objectives. He could lose credibility when he went off the rails regarding content in his speeches, as he did in 1916, when he recommended to the House of Commons that Lord Fisher return to the Admiralty as First Sea Lord. He had, however, made the House sit up and think about the conduction of the First World War, and made the Members realize that victory was NOT a foregone conclusion, especially if matters continued in the prevailing mode - a labour of Hercules at that time in that climate. He saved the Government in 1920 from falling on the occasion of Amritsar, the truly frightful incident in India when British troops fired into a crowd trapped in a square with no exit. The Army had tried and acquitted the

[2] A.G. Gardiner: Pillars of Society: P.58.

responsible officer with indecent speed, and the Government was obliged to support the extremely light reprimand of the military court. Churchill's speech was a masterpiece of rebuke, sorrow, clear identification of issues, including what reasoning an army officer should be capable of, what constitutes danger, what constitutes an "army", what constitutes frightfulness, and how such frightfulness sticks so horribly and inexorably to the perpetrators, in this case, the British. He left a chastened House, but with the Government intact. Churchill saw that the officer concerned never held responsibility again.

There is another area of expression where Churchill could on occasion change the course of history, and that was his ability to bring balance and calm to those who were highly upset. His wartime speeches stiffened the public time and again. He was as steady as a rock through the fiasco of Dunkirk, which turned into an extraordinary kind of victory. During the evacuation of Dunkirk, Churchill flew to France. General Louis Spears, Churchill's friend with a formidable knowledge of French politics and leaders and who had been in Paris throughout, described what happened in Raynaud's own office in the Ministry of War. Petain and General Weygand were there. The figures from Dunkirk showed that of 165 000 soldiers evacuated, 15 000 only were French. "Weygand chimed in, "But how many French? The French are being left behind? His voice was high, querulous and aggressive.

The Prime Minister looked at him for a moment. The light had died out of his face, his fingers were playing a tune on the edge of the table; out came his lower lip as if he were going to retort, and I expected one of those sentences that hit like a blow, but his expression changed again. It was evident that he felt every indulgence must be shown to people so highly tried, undergoing so fearful an ordeal. He looked very sad, and as he spoke a wave of deep emotion swept from his heart to his eyes, where tears appeared not for the only time that afternoon. 'We are companions in misfortune,' he said, 'there is nothing to be gained from recrimination over our common miseries.'
The note he had struck was so true, went so deep, that a stillness fall over the room, something different from silence, it was like the hush that falls on men at the opening of a great national pageant. I imagine all thoughts were turned inwards, questioning whether each one was observing that precept. It was important in its results, for the note it struck was maintained throughout the meeting; goodwill, courtesy and mutual generosity prevailed."[3]

In Churchill's case, the *talents of expression* were more than *adequate* for the task of communication. It must be remembered that Churchill was deeply involved in the election (1904) which

[3] Martin Gilbert: Finest Hour: Vol.VI, p.438.

was fought (and won) on the issue of curbing the powers of the House of Lords. He was able, in simple and direct words, to turn the country round from despair to hope. This gift with spoken words never failed him, even with the tough unimpressible working class men and women. He had a genius for making people stop, think and feel better - to "hearten" them. There are numerous occasions when colleagues or friends comment that they miss his steady support and his "heartening words." Part of his genius was using the right words at the right time. [1.i.ii & iii.]

He used his gift for expression superlatively in the House of Commons. "The House of Commons, though gravely changed, is still an august collective personality. It is always indulgent to those who are proud to be its servants." It was certainly the scene of Churchill's greatest triumphs, his greatest humiliations and criticisms. It is as though he considered the collective personality of the House of Commons an adversary worthy of him. His capacities were stretched when he was faced with 600 critical Members. Throughout his life, Churchill was subjected to severe criticism. It started with his father, who never had a good word to say to him, and continued via friends, colleagues, the press, the public, and continues to this day. There is a recent book about Churchill which the reviewer says is well written and good, but it is not "warts and all", it is only

the warts. Clementine too, criticized him, but she is the only one who told him his faults honestly and lovingly. She tried very hard to make him aware of where he went wrong with the lesser mortals. [1.i.ii & iii.]

Churchill did not so much *stand back from All-that-out-there (reality as a whole)* so much as see it in its entirety and wish to organize it into its rightful channels. He felt VERY strongly that his place was at the centre of things - where history is in the making, where matters of great moment are decided, in the chambers of the great, at the forefront of the battle. Another part of his genius was his faculty of being in the right place at the right time. Cuba, India, the last real cavalry charge in Egypt, South Africa, his escape from Pretoria, the Battle of Sidney Street. During the First World War he went to Antwerp, and spent as much time in France as possible, as a soldier and as a Cabinet Minister. [1.ii.i.]

Churchill enjoyed *cosmic trust.* He had no doubt that his qualities decreed that he should be involved in world affairs. And he had no doubt that the world's affairs were *worth* guiding, the world *belonged* to him as much as he belonged to it. He felt too that he had a specific task to perform, and when he became Prime Minister during the Second World War this feeling was

vindicated. "I felt as if I were walking with destiny," he wrote, "and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this hour and for this trial."[4] [1.ii.ii.]

Churchill undoubtedly had a strong *sense of providence*, or destiny. Allied to this was his enormous self-confidence, and the unquenchable desire to be in the thick of things, even if they were not strictly his business. As a youth he was eager to experience as much as possible - he had a conviction that he would die young, as his father did, and he wanted to do as much as possible before death. When that fear left him, he continued to want to be able to influence the use of power, to be at the centre of events. His deepest frustration on leaving the Admiralty was loss of this influence. The frustration drove him into the trenches, but the call of Parliament was very very strong, and he came back from France, in Clementine's opinion, a few months too early. [1.ii.iii.]

Churchill was Anglican, higher church when he went out than when he came in. He loved ceremony and pomp, custom and *traditional institutions*. And the Church was very much part of the traditional institution, a necessary adjunct to the monarchy and

[4] Mary Soames: My Darling Clementine: P.412.

the state. God was far more accommodating than politicians were - He was well defined and important, but His organization knew its place. Equally, when the Archbishop of Canterbury was worrying on about his cathedrals being bombed, Churchill told him finally that if one was, in spite of all possible protections, he would "have to regard it as a divine summons!" Churchill offended clergymen in the Church of England during the War. He was asked if he was ready for the honour of meeting God. He wondered if God was ready for the honour of meeting him. But he fully recognised the value of stable religion to men, especially when faced with battle. Regarding *ideologies*, Churchill made it crystal clear that he despised Marxism, Bolshevism, Leninism, communism. Like Einstein, he credited the human beings with the ability to think for themselves, and felt thinking for themselves was a fundamental human right. [1.ii.iv.]

Churchill supported the *institutional church*. He considered that his enforced attendance of church services during childhood and adolescence was sufficient for life, and funerals and weddings topped up the balance. None of his really close friends were men of the Church, but he had perfectly good working relationships with the Bishops. Like reason and feeling, Churchill had no trouble separating the affairs of men and the affairs of God. God was a good colleague - He looked after his

own affairs and did not interfere with Churchill's except on demand! [1.ii.v.]

Shaping Experience or Context:

Churchill's father died when he was still a very young man - 22 years old. Churchill strained every nerve to please him, but he must have been the most difficult and tortured of men. He died of syphilis, and it is symptomatic of the disease in the final stages that mental and emotional imbalances occur. He was cruel, critical and exacting. Churchill never lost faith that the relationship between them would have "grown up", that love and loyalty would have prevailed had he lived longer. He was very proud of Lord Randolph's political career. Although Churchill started off well in the Army, it rapidly became clear that it was too restrained and too slow, and that a political career was what he wanted. [2.i.i.]

Personality:

He was not afraid of criticizing others, even if they were all-powerful. For example, he piled into Kitchener, one of the most intimidating of men, about his failures. And he criticized the clergymen ministering the South African troops in the Boer War, alienating an old family friend Lord Roberts.

Although Churchill was an extremely powerful *personality*, with out-size views and abilities, he was disciplined and contained within the traditional systems, particularly his marriage. He is accused of being monumentally vain, a huge ego, uncontrollably persuasive, a warmonger, an endless talker.[1] He would start a conversation with someone normally and charmingly, his oratory would get the better of him and the conversation would become a monologue. But however much he "sinned" in the above ways, he never became tyrannical, or a bully. In fact he was always having his wings clipped in the Commons and the press. He married an outstanding woman, who never once betrayed his confidence. She ran his house, organized him and his children beautifully, did her social duty perfectly, except sometimes when she would "drop like a jaguar on poor ..... and give him a frightful mauling", which meant that the poor..... had ill-thought out ideas or had followed the dictates of fashionable viewpoints. On these rare occasions even Churchill stood by in helpless embarrassment.[2] Apart from all this, she always advised and encouraged him, warned and admonished him whenever she felt it necessary, but she did it honestly with his best interests at heart. When Churchill first took office as Prime Minister in early 1940, he "knew the deadly nature of the onslaught which was being prepared just across the channel;...he knew our nakedness. He drove himself, and he drove others with a

flail in his desire to prepare the country for the assault which seemed certain to be unloosed." In his determination to *drive* on through all difficulties he must at this time have become extremely overbearing and tyrannical to many of those who served him, as the following letter from Clementine shows:

10, Downing Street
Whitehall
June 27, 1940.

My darling,

I hope you will forgive me if I tell you something I feel you ought to know.

One of the men in your entourage (a devoted friend) has been to me & told me that there is a danger of your being generally disliked by your colleagues and subordinates because of your rough sarcastic & overbearing manner - It seems your Private Secretaries had agreed to behave like school boys & 'take what's coming to them' & then escape out of your presence shrugging their shoulders - Higher up, if an idea is suggested (say at a conference) you are supposed to be so contemptuous that presently no ideas, good or bad, will be forthcoming. I was astonished & upset because

in all these years I have been accustomed to all those who have worked with & under you, loving you. - I said this & I was told 'No doubt it's the strain' -

My Darling Winston. I must confess that I have noticed a deterioration in your manner; & you are not as kind as you used to be.

It is for you to give the Orders & if they are bungled - except for the King, the Archbishop of Canterbury & the Speaker, you can sack anyone & everyone. Therefore with this terrific power you must combine urbanity, kindness and if possible Olympic calm. You used to quote: - 'On ne regne sur les ames que par le calme-' I cannot bear that those who serve the Country & yourself should not love you as well as admire and respect you. - Besides you won't get the best results by irascibility & rudeness. They WILL breed either dislike or a slave mentality (Rebellion in War time being out of the question!)

Please forgive your loving devoted & watchful

Clemmie.

[drawing of a cat].

Post Script: I wrote this at Chequers last Sunday tore

it up, but here it is now. [5]

And Churchill pulled himself together and reverted to what was normal for him. [2.ii.i.]

It would appear that in Churchill's *perspective*, battle and war were Man's highest calling, and this *perspective "coloured" his experience*. Battle demanded the best qualities in men - of all stations. It required courage, valour, faithfulness to duty, steadfastness, loyalty, discipline and obedience, sacrifice. It was assumed that he relished and enjoyed war - he was full of verve and vigour when the First World War was declared, his colleagues were scandalized. But he knew what it was. He knew its horror, squalor and inhumanity. On hearing of the death of his gallant comrade, Robert Grenfell, cut down in the Lancer's charge, he wrote: "The realization came home with awful force that war, disguise it as you may, is but a dirty, shoddy business, which only a fool would undertake. Nor was it until the night that I again recognized that there are some things that have to be done, no matter what the cost may be."

and:

"I have tried to gild war, and to solace myself for the loss of dear and gallant friends, with the thought that a soldier's death

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[5] Mary Soames: My Darling Clementine: 1979, p.419

for a cause that he believes in will count for much, whatever may be beyond this world. When the soldier of a civilized Power is killed in action... his body is borne by friendly arms reverently to the grave... But there is nothing *dulce et decorum* about the Dervish dead: nothing of the dignity of unconquerable manhood; all was filthy corruption. Yet these were as brave men as ever walked the earth ... destroyed, not conquered, by machinery."[6]
He said years later that war should be avoided for as long as possible, it was a filthy business and that the other side would not embark upon it if it did not think it could win.

But undeniably Churchill enjoyed challenge of war. There was much exciting work to be done, and great deeds to perform. Churchill was concerned with history. He was very proud of his ancestor, the 1st Duke of Marlborough. He bored his Cabinet colleagues with constant reminders that they would be judged in the light of history. When he fell from power in 1915 on account of the Dardanelles, and he could not get his personal accounts heard or published, he believed that he would finally be vindicated historically. [2.ii.ii.]
He expected qualities of loyalty, courage, honesty from the average man, soldier or labourer, as well as his peers and

[6] The River War, Vol.II, P.221-2.

colleagues. He recognised too the sort of honour of Kirkwood from Beardmores, who had been called a traitor, and who fought to remove the stigma, standing up solidly against the institutions.

Churchill's frustrations threatened to embitter him in 1916 and 1917, before Lloyd George gave him the Ministry of Munitions. Clementine told Martin Gilbert that she thought the complete failure of the Dardanelles issue and his subsequent fall from favour would kill him with grief. He felt betrayed by Asquith, Lloyd George, Fisher and a number of those who he thought of as his friends. During the period of his "excommunication" it becomes apparent in his letters to Clementine that he had suffered from savage depressions. "My Dearest soul," he wrote to her when he got back to France after a week of disastrous leave in 1916: "you have seen me vy weak & foolish & mentally infirm this week." [7] He called these depressions "the Black Dog", and they were the worst at this time of his life.

His love for Clementine was very deep, and had a medieval courtly quality. He wrote to her on March 26, 1916, from his war station in France:

"Oh my darling do not write of 'friendship' to me - I love you more each month that passes and feel the need of you & all your

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[7] Mary Soames: My Darling Clementine: P.262.

beauty. My precious charming Clemmie - I too feel sometimes the longing for rest & peace. So much effort, so many years of ceaseless fighting & so much excitement & now this rough fierce life here under the hammer of Thor, makes my older mind turn- for the first time I think to other things than action. Is it 'Forty & finished' as the old devil's Duchess wrote? But wd it not be delicious to go for a few weeks to some lovely spot in Italy or Spain & just paint & wander about together in bright warm sunlight far from the clash of arms or bray of Parliaments? We know each other so well now & cd play better than we ever could.

Sometimes also I think I wd not mind stopping living vy much - I am so devoured by egoism that I wd like to have another soul in another world & meet you in another setting, & pay you all the love & honour of the gt romances. Two days ago I was walking up to the trenches & we heard several shells on our left, each shot coming nearer as the gun travelled round searching for prey. One cd calculate more or less where the next wd come. Our road led naturally past the ruined convent (where I have made the 'conning tower') and I said 'the next will hit the convent'. Sure enough just as we got abreast of it, the shell arrived with a screech and a roar & tremendous bang & showers of bricks & clouds of smoke & all the soldiers jumped & scurried, & peeped up out of their holes & corners. It did not make me jump a bit - not a

pulse quickened. I do not mind noise as some vy brave people do. But I felt - 20 yards more to the left & no more tangles to unravel, no more anxieties to face, no more hatreds & injustices to encounter: joy of all my foes, relief of that old rogue, a good ending to a chequered life, a final gift - unvalued - to an ungrateful country - an impoverishment of the war-making power of Britain wh no one wd ever know or measure or mourn.
But I am not going to give in or tire at all. I am going on fighting to the vy end in any station open to me from wh I can most effectively drive on this war to victory. If I were somehow persuaded that I was not fit for a wider scope I shd be quite content here - whatever happened. If I am equally persuaded that my worth lies elsewhere I will not be turned from it by any blast of malice or criticism."[8] [2.ii.ii.]

Churchill had a very strong *corporate sense.* He worked for Asquith, Lloyd George, Neville Chamberlain, and was always obedient to their policies and orders. If he disagreed, he did so openly but accepted the Government's rulings. Inevitably, his disagreements sometimes became public. His corporate ideals made much of the fact that the Government was elected by the majority of the people. Public opinion was very powerful, and so Churchill was held by party discipline, parliamentary discipline,

[8] Martin Gilbert: Vol.III. p.744-745.

political discipline. Later, when he became Prime Minister, he respected that discipline from the point of view of ultimate authority, and considered himself answerable to the King, and Parliament. The House of Commons symbolized for him an institution which protected the life, liberty and limb of each common man. He was not *driven to be individual*, he was individual by virtue of what he was. [2.ii.iii.]

Churchill was conventional regarding the religious culture of his time. It was part of the life-system. He protected religious structures, and would have strongly resisted any change. He observed the traditions with good humour - he enjoyed christenings the best - but he did not go to church on Sundays. According to John Colville, his principal Private Secretary during the Second World War, and who knew him very well indeed, said he was an "agnostic who, as the years went by, and ...particularly as a result of the Battle of Britain, slowly began to conceive that there was some overriding power which had a conscious influence on our destinies....But he unquestionably developed in his later years a conviction that this life was not the end." Churchill also speculated whether the Government above might not be a constitutional monarchy, in which case there was always a possibility that the Almighty might have occasion to

"send for him"![9] Evidently he felt that God would not model his heavenly kingdom on that of his earthly church. At one stage he said that possibly the soul might survive death, but without memory of this life. By some mysterious process, Churchill here strayed into one of the ideas contained in the religions Cumpsty labels "Withdrawal Religions."

Churchill undoubtedly had a sense of destiny, and *cosmic trust*, whether he felt it had anything to do with God or not. He was endowed with enormous optimism, and even in his blackest periods never seems to have seriously doubted that "it would be alright in the end". He had this sense of destiny, and faith, that England needed him, and that he could serve her well. He fought just as hard against ideological threats, such as the Bolshevik philosophy and its growing influence. In that sense he *belonged* - he felt rejected by governments and politics, but his patriotism was never questioned. General de Gaulle, at the height of his power, declared: "La France - c'est Moi!" Churchill was incapable of such cosmically idiotic identity.

[3.i.]

Churchill trusted life, the future, and history. He *conceptualized* this in his writings, actions and speeches. He

[9] John Colville: Downing Street Diaries, Vol.I, p.149.

was rarely unsure of this. But he did not, so far as is discernible, question the meaning of life in either philosophical or theological terms. For Churchill, as he was, those questions were fruitless and superfluous. He operated from day to day with a very high feeling, or intuitional, content in his *mode of engagement*. He was undoubtedly highly intelligent, and he thought very carefully about decisions he made, but his values and mode of engagement were so practically and experientially orientated that his mind was the servant of his intuitions, and not the other way round. It was foolish to try and second-guess him. "In his judgment, no less that in his activities, he was entirely unpredictable. A Private Secretary who works intimately with his master over a long period can usually say with little risk of error what the reaction to a given proposition is likely to be. With Winston this was impossible, as even his wife found and admitted. I was often asked what the Prime Minister would feel about something and there were occasions on which I thought I knew the answer for a certainty. Sometimes I was right, but just as often I was wrong." John Colville says in his diary.[10] It was because he had some strange intuitive power - Violet Bonham Carter called it his "daemon" - which made him take a line contrary to logic or the mental reasonings of a normal person. He did not engage in intellectual speculation. His reality was

[10] John Colville: Downing Street Diaries: Vol.I. p.144.

concerned with the practical world of human interaction and endeavour.

Churchill was close to death on numerous occasions. He was not afraid of it. When close to accidental death, he saw everything bathed in a yellow glare. His total disregard for it probably gave rise to speculations about his sanity or responsibility. Once, when he was at the Front during 1916, the Germans imported a band, which played good German folk tunes until the British artillery got the range of it and blew it to bits. Churchill requested a band from Headquarters, it arrived, and Churchill showed them where he wanted them to play, and sat down in the middle of them, encouraging them and singing along. They played for an hour or so, very frightened, but held together by Churchill's cheerful will, shells landing all around them. When he let them off the hook, he told them that English artillery was much better than the German - the Germans hadn't been able to hit the English band!

He alluded to an after-life of sorts on several occasions. He was quite confident that he had done his best, and after-life or not, that counted for a great deal. He was also anxious that his near and dear need not be ashamed of his honour, courage and actions. [3.ii. & iii.]

Funnily enough, Churchill's *blind spots* were of a practical

nature. He very rarely perceived what impression he made on individuals, and he did not take their characteristics into account when dealing with them individually, but he was fully aware of the reactions of audiences, whether speaking to constituents, the House, or as an after dinner speaker. John Colville says that he had, for example, no idea of how long it took to carry out his instructions. He would ask for information which necessitated several enquiries, and yet would expect it to be assembled before Colville had returned to his desk, let alone started a phone call. He would expect drafts back long before it was humanly possible to type them. Those who worked with him or came into close contact with him loved him, and yet he would work them until they dropped, he could be astonishingly inconsiderate. [4.]

Churchill emerges as one of the largest subjects of the human race. The body of work he left is enormous. He held every government post of importance, with the exception of Foreign Secretary. In every post he went to, he made it his business to thoroughly understand its functions and workings. His passions were huge, he loved deeply, he cared passionately, when in pain it was anguish, his anger was terrifying, his depressions were very very black, his impatience was dreadful. He had capabilities to match - courage, generosity, loyalty,

steadfastness, determination, a sense of justice and fair play. He was obviously overbearing, demanding, exhausting and yet those who were close to him or worked with him loved him forever. To live with him must have been like living with St George AND the Dragon, or a Greek hero more than usually full of hubris.

1. There is a story of Churchill at a weekend party with his close friends, who got so irritated with him holding forth that they bet him Five Pounds that he would not be able to read the Bible from cover to cover at a sitting. He took on the bet, sat down in a comfortable chair and started reading. He won the bet, but his friends had to put up with explosions from the chair: "God! What a shit!" whenever Jehovah flung fire, famine and plague at the poor Israelites.

2. When France collapsed in 1940, England stood alone against Germany. It was imperative that the French Navy did not re-inforce the German fleet. To avoid this, French ships in British harbours were taken over swiftly and efficiently, but the fleet at Oran in North Africa was destroyed or immobilized - by the British Navy. 1300 lives were lost. General de Gaulle lunched at Downing Street just after this event. Clementine expressed the hope that the remaining French fleet would join the British and carry on the fight. The General replied that what would give the French the most satisfaction was to turn their guns "On you!", i.e. the British. Clementine "rebuked him soundly, in her perfect, rather formal French, for uttering words and sentiments that ill became either an ally or a guest in this country. 'You must forgive my wife. She speaks French too well' said Churchill, trying to conciliate. 'No, Winston, it is because there are certain things that a woman can say to a man which a man cannot say, and I am saying them to you - General de Gaulle!'" After this verbal fracas, the General was much upset, and apologized profusely; and the next day he sent a huge basket of flowers for Clementine. Mary Soames: My Darling Clementine: 1979, p.418

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CHAPTER SIX

ALBERT EINSTEIN

PARTS I, II, III & IV

CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ALBERT EINSTEIN

PART I

Albert Einstein was born in Ulm, Swabia, March 14, 1879, the closest part of Bavaria to France via the Alsatian mountains. The family was Jewish, though not orthodox. His father was "exceedingly friendly, mild and wise,"[1] and had a small electrochemical works. Philipp Frank, one of his earlier biographers, says Einstein was offended by the fact that his father scoffed at religion, and he regarded this derision as resulting from disharmonious thought and a lack of understanding of the laws of cosmic nature.[2] His mother was musical, with a fine sense of humour, who read Schiller and Heine. His sister Maja was born four years after him. When, much later, Einstein was asked if he could attribute his genius to his mother, he replied: "I have no particular talent, I am merely

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[1] Clark: p.22: Einstein-Kornitzer, Gazette & Daily, York, Pa., Sept. 20, 1948.

[2] Frank: p.9 & p.15.

extremely inquisitive. So I think we can dispense with this question of heritage."3 The people he really loved were his father, his mother and his sister.

As a child, he was slow and unsociable, not talking until he was four, nor enthusiastic about other children and running around. His nurse called him "Pater Langweil" - Father Bore. He was obviously pretty pedantic, too, lacking fluency of speech, and only speaking after thorough and careful consideration and reflection. Because of his conscientiousness in not making any false statements or telling lies he was called Beidermeier (Honest John) by his classmates.4 There is speculation that Einstein was dyslexic, or in some way retarded, and he himself said, "I sometimes ask myself how did it come that I was the one to develop the theory of relativity. The reason, I think, is that a normal adult never stops to think about problems of space and time. These are things which he has thought of as a child. But my intellectual development was retarded, as a result of which I began to wonder about space and time only when I had already grown up. Naturally I could go deeper into the problem than a child with normal abilities."5 There is a parallel

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3 Clark: p.22. Carl Seelig, Albert Einstein: p.11.

4 Frank: p.10.

5 Clark: p.27. Einstein-James Franck, quoted Seelig, p.71.

here with Jan Smuts, who was the family shepherd until he was twelve years old, when he was first sent to school.

Indisputable is Einstein's profound distaste for any form of coercion arbitrarily imposed by one set of people on another. All forms of automatic behaviour were anathema to him, for example teachers who obliged their pupils to learn lessons by rote. It was the easiest course of action for bored or lazy teachers, who had the authority to impose it. Einstein abhorred it. He experienced Prussian authority for the sake of it at the Luitpold Gymnasium, during his six years secondary education. He perceived that the Prussians idealized discipline and authority to an extreme degree, and he distrusted this on a deep level. Much later he said that the "worst thing seems to be for a school principally to work with methods of fear, force, and artificial authority. .....All that it produces is a servile helot."[6]

Other forms of mechanical behaviour which fell into this disliked category were military training, and organised religion. He saw these as deliberate attempts to curb and stifle natural individuality which, to him, was the ultimate inhumanity, turning

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[6] Clark: p.31. 72nd Convocation of STate University of New York.

men into automatons.

Einstein's primary education was at a Roman Catholic school, where the teachers appeared to him like sergeants. At the time, his Jewishness was neither remarkable nor remarked on by the school or Einstein. There is very little documented about Einstein's early education, other than what he tried to recall himself, and as one biographer noted, it is astonishing how little he remembers, given his almost perfect memory for theoretical physics and allied subjects. He started playing the violin, but showed no promise at all until he met Mozart. Music was very important to him, but his performance always remained amateur.

He recalled his father showing him a compass when he was five years old, and the strong impression made by this needle which always swung back to its north-pointing position, in response to some unseen and unknown force. Einstein's interest in mathematics was also aroused at home and not at school. It was his uncle Ernst Koch and not the teacher at the gymnasium who gave him his first understanding of algebra. "It is a merry science," he told the boy; "when the animal that we are hunting cannot be caught, we call it x temporarily and continue to hunt it until it is bagged, and we can give it its name." With such

instruction, Albert found a great deal of pleasure in solving simple problems by hitting upon new ideas instead of just using a prescribed method.[7]

A Jewish student Talmey introduced Einstein to Bernstein's *Popular Books on Natural Science*, and Buchner's *Force and Matter*. He discussed plants, animals, their mutual interdependence, and the hypotheses concerning their origin; stars, meteors, volcanoes, earthquakes, climate, and many other topics, never leaving out of sight the greater interrelation of nature. Soon afterwards Talmey gave him Speiker's *Lehrbuch der ebenen Geometrie*, and Einstein worked through that too. He was deeply impressed with the orderliness and straightforwardness of the clear exposition and reasoned proof, and the connection between the diagrams and the reasoning. For him they contained elements of intellectual truth, beauty and order. When he overtook Talmey in the mathematical field, Talmey introduced him to philosophy, and Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* became his favourite book. He was unimpressed with biology and Darwin. Later he wrote: "Living matter and clarity are opposites - they run away from one another... Biological procedures cannot be

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[7] Frank: p.14.

expressed in mathematical formulas."[8] Migrating birds did not interest him nearly as much as the unseen beams they followed.

He was never interested in the life or behaviourial sciences. They were quite peripheral to the mainstream of his life value system. He was immensely kind and as generous as he could be, was very fond of his family in a detached sort of way, but he was just not interested in gardens, cats, dogs, food, crops, forests, babies, physiology, even physical comfort. Abraham Flexner visited him at his home in Berlin in 1932. He writes: "I was still wearing my winter clothes and heavy overcoat. Arriving at Eintein's country home, beautiful and commodious, I found him seated on the veranda wearing summer flannels. He asked me to sit down. I asked whether I might wear my overcoat. "Oh, yes," he replied. "Aren't you chilly?" I asked, surveying his costume. "No," he replied, "my dress is according to this season, not according to the weather; it is summer."[9] He later walked Flexner to the bus in the rain in an old sweater and no hat. He never owned a car. Public transport was adequate. Directions to his house were given in terms of trains and buses. The

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[8] Clark: p.33: Einstein-Hedwig Born, Jan.15,1927, Born-Einstein letters, London, 1971, & Carl Seelig, Ed., Helle Zeit; Dunkel Zeit, p.64.

[9] Clark: 543. Flexner, p.384.

scenery he noticed (and loved) was mountains, huge, sharp, defined, pure white and black, products of immense cosmic forces. He enjoyed sailing, aware of wind and water in turbulence or calm, their effect on the boat's shape. When there was calm, and all the various forces were still, he would get out his notebook and wander through a few cosmic equations on whatever was occupying his working mind at that moment. But he never dug in a garden. Rudolph Kayser wrote a biography of Einstein, who wrote in the Introduction: "What has perhaps been overlooked is the irrational, the inconsistent, the droll, even the insane, which nature, inexhaustibly operative - implants in an individual, seemingly for her own amusement. But these things are singled out only in the crucible of one's own mind."[10] Einstein was not unaware of the intractable stuff of human nature. Pauli, Bohr and Pais said they were different in Einstein's presence. Oppenheim says: There was always with him a wonderful purity at once childlike and profoundly stubborn.

The mainstream of his value system was his endeavour to understand cosmic design. Theoretical physics became his life work, demanding all his energy and attention. Everything else was significant for him only in so far as it affected his progress toward this goal. When he was taken from it too much

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[10] Pais: p.6. Rudolph Kayser, stepson-in-law.

or for too long, which happened for example when he made fund-raising tours for the new Israel, he firmly refused to repeat the effort. He had friends, indeed he was a very popular figure, but he preferred isolation and the freedom which comes from having no really close relationships. "My passionate interest in social justice and social responsibility has always stood in curious contrast to a marked lack of desire for direct association with men and women. I am a horse for single harness, not cut out for tandem or teamwork. I have never belonged wholeheartedly to any country or state, to my circle of friends, or even to my own family. These ties have always been accompanied by a vague aloofness, and the wish to withdraw into myself increases with the years. Such isolation is sometimes bitter, but I do not regret being cut off from the understanding and sympathy of other men. I lose something by it, to be sure, but I am compensated for it in being rendered independent of the customs, opinions, and prejudices of others, and am not tempted to rest my peace of mind upon such shifting foundations."[11] He enjoyed the human or organic side of life up to a point only, preferring the freedom which non-involvement brings.

He demonstrated this detachment when his first marriage was becoming increasingly difficult, and he was working on the four

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[11] Frank: p.49/50.

papers which appeared together in *Annalen der Physik No. 17.*

However, there arose, in Einstein, an aversion to religious practice. "Through the reading of popular scientific books I soon reached the conviction that many of the stories in the Bible could not be true. The consequence was a positively fanatic [orgy of] free thinking coupled with the impression that youth is intentionally being deceived by the state through lies; it was a crushing impression. Suspicion against every kind of authority grew out of this experience, a sceptical attitude towards the convictions which were alive in any specific social environment - an attitude which has never again left me, even though later on, because of a better insight into the causal connections, it lost some of its original poignancy."[12]

Churchill experienced the equivalent. He too had to work through the discovery of the supposed duplicity of his teachers, and the reasons for such structures being in place. Einstein was no longer able to regard ritual customs as poetic symbols of the position of man in the universe; instead he saw in them, more and more, superstitious usages preventing man from thinking independently.

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[12] Clark: p.36. Albert Einstein: Philosphoer-Scientist, Paul A. Schilpp, ed. p.3.

Einstein went to a catholic school, in the heart of the Baroque area, where church art had reached its highest flights. It is sensuous and lavish in the extreme, plump cherubs, floating angels, nature naturing, idealized, rich, organic and very very pretty. There is no record found yet of him seeing this kind of art, but if he had done so he would have returned to the comparative simplicity of the Jewish taste thankfully. Later in life, Margot Einstein was to say: In visual art, of course, he preferred the old masters. They seemed to him more convincing (he used this word!) than the masters of our time. But sometimes he surprised me by looking at the early period of Picasso (1905 & 1906)... Words like cubism, abstract painting, did not mean anything to him. Giotto moved him deeply, also Fra Angelico and Piero della Francesca. He loved the small Italian towns - he loved cities like Florence, Siena, Pisa, Bologna, Padua and admired the architecture. If it comes to Rembrandt, yes, he admired him and felt him deeply."[13]

The Luitpoldt Gymnasium was very secular, with, as mentioned earlier, emphasis on the Prussian way of thought. However, he decided not to become a member of any religious group, because he wanted to avoid having his personal

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[13] Page 16: Margot Einstein:

relationship to the laws of nature arranged according to some mechanical order or set of loose symbols.

He thus freed himself - and his formidable intellect - from orthodox mythical obedience, started to identify what his personal interests were, and in what manner he wanted to pursue them. And he wanted to understand the whole of physics. Later, when he had realized his enormous achievements, Martin Buber pressed him hard "with a concealed question about faith." Finally, in Buber's words, Einstein "Burst forth," revealingly. "'What we (and by this 'we' he meant we physicists) strive for,' he cried, 'is just to draw His lines after Him.' To draw after - as one retraces a geometrical figure."[14] And again: "I am not much with people, and I am not a family man. I want my peace. I want to know how God created this world. I am not interested in this or that phenomenon, in the spectrum of this or that element. I want to know His thoughts, the rest are details."[15]

His biographer Ronald Clark sees Einstein's religious views this way:

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[14] Martin Buber: The Knowledge of Man, p.156.

[15] Clark: p.27. Esther Salaman, "A Talk with Einstein," The Listener, Sept. 8, 1955.

..." much of Einstein's writing gives the impression of belief in a God even more intangible and impersonal than a celestial machine minder, running the universe with undisputable authority and expert touch. Instead, Einstein's God appears as the physical world itself, with its infinitely marvellous structure operating at atomic level with the beauty of a craftsman's wristwatch, and at stellar level with the majesty of a massive cyclotron. This was belief enough. It grew early and rooted deep. Only later it was dignified by the title of cosmic religion, a phrase which gave plausible respectability to the views of a man who did not believe in a life after death and who felt that if virtue paid off in the earthly one, then this was the result of cause and effect rather than celestial reward. Einstein's God thus stood for an orderly system obeying the rules which could be discovered by those who had the courage, the imagination, and the persistence to go on searching for them. And it was to this task which he began to turn his mind soon after the age of twelve. For the rest of his life everything else was to seem almost trivial by comparison."[16]

There are certain similarities here with Leonardo. He too was "detached" from human relationships, concentrated on his own work, unworried by questions of theology and ontology. He too

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[16] Clark: p.38.

wanted to understand the whole.

Einstein was sure that if a man knew what questions to ask nature, then the answers would be discovered. The concepts of cause and effect were deep in his psyche. God might pose difficult problems, but never broke the rules by unanswerable ones. What is more, he never left the answers to blind chance. "God is subtle, but he is not malicious," and "God does not play dice with the world," said Einstein. He believed in "Spinoza's God, who reveals himself in the harmony of all that exists, not in a God who concerns himself with the fate and actions of men."[17] Einstein could never believe that quantum mechanics was only logically expressible in terms of statistics, probabilities, uncertainties, information losses, in other words that random chance played a role in true physics. He said it was "incomplete". The harmony should again become apparent.

But it was some time before Einstein reached these conclusions.

At age 15, Einstein was far ahead in the field of maths, and far behind in classics. His parents went to Milan, leaving Einstein at the Gymnasium, but he soon joined them. He rebelled against his school, classics, German citizenship, and legal

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[17] Clark: p.38. New Statesman, April 25, 1929.

adherence to the Jewish religious community. He did nothing intensively for a while, until his father said that he could no longer support him, he would have to take up some profession as soon as possible. The fascination with physics was already in place, and he decided to become an electrical engineer. He tried to enter the Swiss Federal Polytechnic School in Zurich. His maths and physics were outstanding, classics, botany, zoology, languages hopelessly inadequate. He was advised to go the Aarau to catch up. From Aarau he passed into the Swiss Federal Polytechnic School. During his time there he inclined more and more to theoretical physics. His fellow students remember him with affection, independent minded, fun, and un-intimidated by authority. On a geological outing puffing up a mountain, his teacher said: "Now, Einstein, how do the strata run here? From below upwards or vice versa?" The reply: "It is pretty much the same to me whichever way they run, Professor."[18]

Studying physics at the same time was a Chzeck girl, Mileva Maric, who was part of the group. She did not pass her exams, but later when Einstein got his job at the Patent Office in Berne, they married. Marcel Grossman, who became a life-long friend of Einstein's, procured it for him at 3000 francs

[18] Clark: p.46. Seelig, p.19.

annually.

Until 1908, Swiss patents were granted only for inventions which could be represented by a model. The model was as important as the specifications which described what the device was intended to do. The specification should be in words which were clear and unequivocal. These inventions, ideas, and proposals which arrived at the office consisted largely of suggestions for practical, utilitarian, basically simple, and often homely applications of technology to the mundane affairs of everyday life, from the simple to the complex, the clear to the thoroughly obscure. During his days at the Patent Office, Einstein developed to a high degree an intuitive discernment of essentials. The work frequently involved rewriting the inventor's vague or inadequately worded applications for legal protection. This meant that Einstein had to clearly grasp the inventor's original *a priori* idea, to use Kantian terms. "It gave me the opportunity to think about physics. Moreover, a practical profession is a salvation for a man of my type; an academic career compels a young man to scientific production, and only strong characters can resist the temptation of superficial analysis," said Einstein of his mode of life at this time.[19] It gave him more than the opportunity to think about physics.

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[19] Clark: p.75. Helle Zeit, p.12.

His own theories sprang, as he never tired of stressing, from observations of facts and from deductions which would account for these facts, and it was just this skill which was sharpened to an extraordinarily high degree during his days at the Patent Office. "It is no exaggeration," says a member of the Patent Office staff, "to say that his activity was, at least in the first few months, literally an apprenticeship in the critical reading of technical specifications and in understanding the drawings that went with them." It was a rigorous training in clarity, and intuitive perception of the heart of a problem, and the translation of that problem into mechanical terms.

He settled into what was, for him, the ideal working conditions. Eight hours at the Patent Office, and eight hours at home, during which he worked (and played) with his theoretical physics. He was unknown in the scientific world, therefore unsought, and untrammelled by what the Germans called "the literature of the subject", approaching it without excessive education. Clark points out that he had had four years rigorous training at the Swiss Technical school, but it must be remembered that he was old enough to discriminate for himself when he embarked upon the training, and then several of his professors found him too independent.

At the Patent Office, he read leading physics journals published in German, and had access to Patent Office library, good on engineering but not so much on physics. This isolation could account for his broad view of specific scientific problems, and he could ignore arguments of other scientists because he was unaware of them. It also left him free to pursue his own ideas in his own way, highly unorthodox as it was. Clark calls it an "inner compulsion", for which he was willing to sacrifice everything.[20]

The physics Einstein had learned at the Swiss Polytechnic were pedantic. The towering edifice of classical physics was unquestioned gospel, and awkward questions were ignored. Said J. Robert Oppenheimer: "From the time of Newton up to the end of the last century, physicists built, on the basis of these laws, a magnificently precise and beautiful science involving the celestial mechanics of the solar system, involving incredible problems in the Cambridge Tripos, involving the theory of gases, involving the behavior of fluids, of elastic vibrations, of sound - indeed a comprehensive system as robust and varied and apparently all powerful that what was in store for it could hardly be imagined." All problems could be solved with finer measurements or more accurate observations. Classical physics

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[20] Clark: p.86.

was an "absolute" science, time and space were constant and unchanging, cause and effect were inevitable, sound and light waves must move through a medium, and light travelled in a straight line, at an infinite speed. This was later modified when the speed of light was proven to be constant, at 186 000 miles per second. And because of the elegant mechanics of the whole system, all matter, including time, operated in an absolutely quantifiable relationship with everything else, an inter-linked continuous frame of reference. Atoms were solid matter, when they were allowed at all. Faraday's work on electromagnetism from 1831, and Maxwell's equations (1860s) were not recognised for what they were, i.e. proof of existence of new phenomena, un-catered for by classical mechanics. There was supreme confidence in the measured, the manufacturable, the observable, and cause and effect.

At home, Einstein read and studied Faraday, Maxwell (who was not mentioned in his Swiss Polytechnic lectures on electricity), Hertz, Kirchoff and Helmholtz, and the French mathematician, Henri Poincare. While Einstein was at the Polytechnic, Poincare's paper was read in which he said "Absolute space, absolute time, even Euclidean Geometry, are not conditions to be imposed on mechanics; one can express the facts connecting them in terms of non-Euclidean space." Whether Einstein heard

this paper or not, it suited his *modus operandi* excellently. He never allowed established "facts" as the automatic final answer. Ernst Mach, too, criticised such expressions as "absolute space," "absolute time", and "absolute motion", saying they could not be connected in any way with physical observations. They could only be observed in connection with other observable phenomena.

However, Einstein differed with Machian philosophy which held that general laws of physics are only summaries of experimental results. Einstein believed that these general laws ALWAYS had to be perceived, understood, and interpreted with human reason. Until they were given cognition, they were nothing. And he saw the formulas by which they were expressed as inventions of the human mind. "I am anxious to draw attention to the fact that this theory is not speculative in origin. It owes its invention entirely to the desire to make physical theory fit observed facts as well as possible. Here we have no revolutionary act, but the natural combination of a line that can be traced through the centuries."[21] The facts and laws were the same as they had ever been. It was the human perception and formulation which had grown, and the human mind had invented the means of expression. More of the truth was thus expressed by human reason. This

[21] Clark: p.343. The Nation, June 18, 1921.

reflects his familiarity with Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, which he used to read for "edification - like listening to a sermon." {[1]}

Einstein never ever lost the desire for the "magnificent feeling" (mentioned to Jonas Plesch) of perceiving the underlying universal plan, and he was also able to penetrate realities which were apart from the direct visible truth, which were NOT cosy classical Classical Physics. Einstein once wrote of "the eternal struggle of the inventive human mind for a fuller understanding of the law governing physical phenomena."[22] Sir Basil Schonland called Maxwell "fey," not a usual description of a scientist. Einstein himself agreed that inventiveness, imagination, the intuitive approach - considered "artistic" adjuncts rather than "scientific" - played a serious part in his work. And when his friend Janos Plesch commented years later that there seemed to be some connection between mathematics and fiction, a field in which the writer made a world out of invented characters and situations and then compared it with the existing world, Einstein replied: "There may be something in what you say. When I examine myself and my methods of thought I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than my talent for absorbing

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[22] Clark: p.118: Einstein & Inveld, p. vi.

positive knowledge."[23]

Einstein continued working at the Patent Office, virtually isolated from the scientific community.

After his papers had been published in 1905, the scientific community became aware of Einstein. He was, needless to say, offered several posts. He eventually went to the Swiss Polytechnic to lecture in June, 1909. He and his family moved to Zurich, to an associate professorship position. They lived and worked among the poorly paid, overworked lower professional classes, and to make ends meet, Mileva took in student lodgers. "In my relativity theory I set up a clock at every point in space, but in reality I find it difficult to provide even one clock in my room," Einstein told Philipp Frank.[24] He stayed in Zurich, until March 1911, then accepted a post in Prague. He liked working in a congenial climate, near the places where, as he once wrote to Janos Plesch, "the future was being brewed."[25] No accident that he went to Prague and there found the mathematical apparatus for Relativity, working with George Pick,

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[23] Clark: p.118: Plesch, p.207.

[24] Frank: p.96.

[25] Clark: p.169: Einstein-Plesch, Feb. 3, 1944, Plesch Correspondence.

who suggested using the absolute differential calculus of Ricci and Levi-Civita for his new theories.

At the time that Einstein's name was put forward to go to Prague, the Emperor still had the power of veto over appointment - and he would confirm university appointments only of confessing members of a recognized church, a state of grace from which Einstein had excluded himself by stating that he was an "unbeliever". He had never officially renounced his faith, so he was technically a Jew, but his professed unbelief was a problem to his appointment. It was at first refused confirmation. Ironically, he later wrote to his friend Ehrenfest, who had announced that he was an atheist: "I am frankly annoyed that you have this caprice of being without religious affiliations. Give it up for your children's sake. Besides, once you are professor here you can go back to this curious whim again - and it is only necessary for a little while."[26]

He appears to have been made aware of his Jewish heritage in Prague. He remembers seeing the 1000 year old Jewish cemetry, the organs in Catholic churches, chorales in Protestant churches, mournful Jewish melodies, resonant Hussite hymns, folk music and

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[26] Clark: p. April 25, 1912, quoted by Klein, Paul Ehrenfest, P. 180.

the works of Czech, Russian and German composers. Here, too, he became aware of racial tensions. The Germans were disliked in Prague. Half the Germans were Jews. The Czechs and Germans lived in their own worlds. Einstein acknowledged his Jewish origin, and his nationality was Swiss. And he detached himself from it with his usual skill and dedicated his energies to solving the puzzle of gravity.

At the Solvay Congress, 1911, in Brussels, he met the leading scientists of the day. He met Lindemann, Churchill's future advisor, who according to one colleague, "had time for a few dukes and a few physicists, but regarded most of the rest of mankind as furry little animals." Substituting "pacifists" for "dukes", says Clark, much the same was true of Einstein.[27] Lindemann saw the towering intellect which, he thought, made Einstein the greatest genius of the century. But "In all matters of politics he was a guileless child, and would lend his great name to worthless causes which he did not understand, signing many ridiculous political or other manifestos put before him by designing people." He would also give students references and recommendations when asked. One student arriving in Oxford from Middle Europe in the 1930s was advised not to show or speak of his personal reference from Einstein, as they could be had two

[27] Clark: p.186: Birkenhead, p.37.

for a penny. But for all that, when he wished, Einstein could "speak of basic metaphysical concepts such as time or space as matter of factly as others speak of sandwiches or potatoes."

Einstein's work gave a terrific impetus to Science, not only physics, but related subjects, including philosophy. But there was one result which increasingly affected Einstein over the years. When the Rutherford/Bohr model of the atom was appreciated, it was clear that the causes behind the movements of subnuclear particles were not known. Causes were nevertheless believed to exist. During the next few years it became more and more apparent that this was not always so; that whatever happened at other levels, individual events at the level of the subatomic world were unpredictable and could only be described statistically. Einstein would never allow this to be the end of the line. He always held to the nineteenth century view of causality.

"Science without epistemology is, in so far as it is thinkable at all - primitive and muddled....." says Einstein. "He (the scientist) must appear to the systematic epistemologist as a type of unscrupulous opportunist: he appears as realist in so far as he seeks to describe the world independent of acts of perception; as idealist in so far as he looks upon his concepts and theories

as the free inventions of the human spirit (not logically derivable from what is empirically given); as positivist in so far as he considers his concepts and theories justified only to the extent to which they furnish logical representation of relations among sensory experience. He may even appear platonist or pythagorean in so far as he considers the viewpoint of logical simplicity as an indispensable and effective tool of his research."[28]

A comment from a Abba Eban, Israeli Ambassador to US in 1955 after Einstein's death: The Hebrew mind has been obsessed for centuries by a concept of order and harmony in the universal design. The search for laws hitherto unknown which govern cosmic forces; the doctrine of a relative harmony between matter and energy -these are all more likely to emerge from a basic Hebrew philosophy and turn of mind than from any others."[29]

Clark says: "This may sound like hindsight plus special pleading; yet the long line of Jewish physicists from the nineteenth century, and the even longer list of those who later

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[28]. Pais: P.13. Letter to J. Stah - 1908.

[29] Jewish Chronicle: Oct. 2, 1959, P.33.

sought the underlying unifications of the subatomic world, give it a plausibility which cannot easily be contested.[30]

Indeed, Jewish thinkers are afraid of nothing.

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[30] Clark: P. 36.

1. OUT OF MY LATER YEARS: P. 515.

THE LAWS OF SCIENCE AND THE LAWS OF ETHICS.

Science searches for relations which are thought to exist independently of the searching individual. This includes the case where man himself is the subject. Or the subject of scientific statements may be concepts created by ourselves, as in mathematics. Such concepts are not necessarily supposed to correspond to any objects in the outside world. However, all scientific statements and laws have one characteristic in common: they are "true or false" (adequate or inadequate). Roughly speaking, our reaction to them is "yes" or "no".

The scientific way of thinking has a further characteristic. The concepts which it uses to build up its coherent systems are not expressions of emotion. For the scientist, there is only "being", but no wishing, no valuing, no good, no evil; no goal. As long as we remain within the realm of science proper, we can never meet with a sentence of the type: "Thou shalt not lie." There is something like a Puritan's restraint in the scientist who seeks truth: he keeps away from everything voluntaristic or emotional. Incidentally, this trait is the result of a slow development, peculiar to modern Western thought.

From this it might seem as if logical thinking were irrelevant for ethics. Scientific statements of facts and relations, indeed, cannot produce ethical directives. However, ethical directives can be made rational and coherent by logical thinking and empirical knowledge. If we can agree on some fundamental ethical propositions, then other ethical propositions can be derived from them, provided that the original premises are stated with sufficient precision. Such ethical premises play a similar role in ethics, to that played by axioms in mathematics.

This is why we do not feel at all that it is meaningless to ask such questions as: "Why should we not lie?' We feel that such questions are meaningful because in all discussions of this kind some ethical premises are tacitly taken for granted. We then feel satisfied when we succeed in tracing back the ethical directive in question to these basic premises. In the case of lying this might perhaps be done in some way such as this: Lying destroys confidence in the statements of other people. Without such confidence, social co-operation, however, is essential to make human life possible and tolerable. This means that the rule "Thou shalt not lie" has been traced back to the demands: "Human life shall be preserved" and "Pain and sorrow shall be lessened as much as possible."

But what is the origin of such ethical axioms? Are they arbitrary? Are they based on mere authority? Do they stem from experiences of men as are they conditioned indirectly by such experiences?

For pure logic all axioms are arbitrary, including the axioms of ethics. But they are by no means arbitrary from a psychological and genetic point of view. They are derived from our inborn tendencies to avoid pain and annihilation, and from the accumulated emotional reaction of individuals to the behavior of their neighbors.

It is the privilege of man's moral genius, impersonated by inspired individuals, to advance ethical axioms which are so comprehensive and so well founded that men will accept them as grounded in the vast mass of their individual emotional experiences. Ethical axioms are found and tested not very differently from the axioms of science. Truth is what stands the test of experience.

EINSTEIN'S SCIENCE

PART II

The first two scientific papers which Einstein published, in 1902, were concerned with the forces which held together the molecules of a liquid. "My major aim...was to find facts which would guarantee as much as possible the existence of atoms of definite finite size." There was, at the time, an eminent lobby of scientists who did not believe in the physical existence of atoms. Einstein wrote to Marcel Grossman in April, 1901: "As regards science, I have got a few wonderful ideas in my head which have to be worked out in due course. I am now almost sure that my theory of the power of attraction of atoms can be extended to gases and that the characteristic constants for nearly all elements could be specified without undue difficulty. Then the question of the inner relationship of molecular forces will also take a decisive step forward. Perhaps the researches of others directed to different goals will ultimately prove the theory. In that case I shall then use all I have so far achieved in the field of molecular attraction in my doctor's thesis. It is a magnificent feeling to recognize the unity of a complex of phenomena which appear to be things quite apart from the direct

visible truth."[1]

From 1902, Einstein worked very much alone. He was a "failed" teacher in that he had been unable to get a teaching post, and had a humble job in the Patent's Office. Clark says that this isolation accounts for his broad view of specific scientific problems - he ignored the detailed arguments of others because he was unaware of them! [2]

In 1905, he published five papers, four of which would have made him famous - three out of the four in the *Annalen der Physik, Vol. 17*, and one in the next volume, *Annalen der Physik, Vol. 18*.{[1]} All four were short, all contained the foundations for new theories, even though they did not elaborate - the Frenchman Louis de Broglie called them "blazing rockets which in the dark of night suddenly cast a brief but powerful illumination over an immense unknown region."[3]

In the spring of 1905 Einstein wrote to his friend Conrad Habicht about these papers. "I promise you in return four works, the first one very soon as I am expecting my author's copies. It is

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[1] Clark: p.77. Seelig, p.53.

[2] Clark: p.86.

[3] Clark: p.87. Schilpp, p.110.

on the radiation and energy of light, and it is very revolutionary as you will see for yourself, provided you send me your work first. The second discusses the methods of determining the real dimensions of atoms by investigating the diffusion and internal friction of liquid solutions. The third proves that, according to the molecular theory of heat, bodies of dimensions of the order of 1/1000 mm. suspended in liquid experience apparent random movement due to the thermal motion of molecules. Such movements of suspended bodies has actually been observed by biologists who call it Brownian molecular movement. The fourth work is based on the concepts of electrodynamics of moving bodies and modifies the theory of space and time; the purely kinematic part of this work should interest you..."[4]

The second paper, on methods to determine dimensions of atoms, was his doctoral dissertation for the University of Zurich, good, competent, but conventional. The other three were original dynamite.

The first paper mentioned to Habicht was called "On a Heuristic Viewpoint Concerning the Production and Transformation of Light," later called Einstein's photoelectric paper. "There is a profound formal difference between the theoretical ideas that

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[4] Clark: p.87: Einstein-Habicht, Early 1905. Seelig.p.74.

physicists have formed concerning gases and other ponderable bodies, and Maxwell's theory of electromagnetic processes on so-called empty space." The difference could be resolved if for some purposes light itself could be considered as a collection of independent particles which behaved like the particles of a gas - the heuristic viewpoint of his title. When Einstein began to consider light in terms of particles, like gases, he found that it provided some startlingly useful results. The photoelectric explanation was one of them. Until this time, both heat and light were considered to be continuous waves, whose density could be increased *ad infinitum*. To admit that light had a dual nature, wave and particle, was a scientific scandal. Furthermore, molecules and atoms were by no means established Classical Physics. Max Planck had realized that Classical physics was not big enough to contain his emerging theories of radiation emission. He discovered that when rays of light or heat struck a surface, light was emitted from the surface in a) discrete lumps, or packets of energy, and b) on wave lengths which were multiples of his constant: h = 6.6 x 10 =27. He called these packets of energy "quanta", and their size depended upon the frequency of the light that struck them. Bombed with more intense light, i.e. higher frequency light, the number and wavelengths of the emissions increased, but their ejection speed did *not* increase. Another problem for Classical

physics, which assumed that more intense light should accelerate the speed of ejected quanta. Planck said nothing about the nature of light itself during propagation between the point of radiation and that of absorption. Einstein set out to investigate whether the energy emitted retained it's discrete character during it propagation or not. It did. No matter what distance light of a certain frequency travelled from the source, it still consisted of the same portions of energy, or retained its same frequency, the only difference being that farther away from the source, the individual portions were spread thinner. He once expressed this dilemma by the following comparison: "Even though beer is always sold in pint bottles, it does not follow that beer consists of indivisible pint portions."[5] He calculated the maximum kinetic energy of the electron when emitted using Planck's constant, the frequency of the light, and the energy lost by the electron in its escape from the surface. This included both the concept of light as corpuscular, and wave theory by using frequency, a vital part of wave mechanics. Light was discontinuous, which threw doubt on the entire conception of a continuous forcefield. Niels Bohr later wrote that physics "was confronted with a novel kind of complementary relationship between the applications of different

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[5] Frank: p.73.

fundamental concepts of classical physics."[6]

This level of atomic process could only be described in terms of statistical chance. The sheer numbers of calculations needed were huge. Individual calculations were impossible for atoms, electrons, photons, light waves - small, fast and numerous - and statistical calculations were the only way to cope with the huge volume. It would appear to a traditionalist Newtonian that it was indeed a case of "God playing dice with the world," a premise Einstein never accepted. Yet he had pushed the stone that started the avalanche.

The third paper mentioned to Habicht by Einstein he called "On the Motion of Small Particles Suspended in a Stationary Liquid According to the Molecular Kinetic Theory of Induction." This was original work which can be connected to his doctoral thesis for the University of Zurich, which dealt with the thermodynamics of molecules. A Scotsman, Robert Brown, had observed that pollen dust suspended in water exhibited a continuous, zigzag, random motion. "These motions," he wrote, "were such as to satisfy me, after frequently repeated observation, that they arose neither from current in the fluid nor from its gradual

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[6] Neils Bohr: "The Solvay Meetings & Development of Quantum Physics," in *Essays 1958-1962 on Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge.* p.83.

evaporation, but belonged to the particle itself."[7] Further work on the subject had revealed that application of heat to the liquid would speed up the random movements, but if bigger particles were observed, the movement decreased. Einstein saw this phenomenon for himself later on: "It seems contradictory to all previous experience. Examination of the position of one suspended particle, say every thirty seconds, reveals the fantastic form of its path. The amazing thing is the apparently eternal character of the motion. A swinging pendulum placed in water soon comes to rest if not impelled by some external force. The existence of a never diminishing motion seems contrary to all experience. This difficulty was splendidly clarified by the Kinetic theory of matter." [8] {2} No false modesty there, but he was thinking of the theory itself, and not its formulator.
For this 1905 paper, he had used his new statistical methods developed in his doctoral thesis to calculate the mass and number of molecules involved. The kinetic energy of the water molecules in constant collision with the microscopic particles of other matters produced irregular forces in random directions, which gave rise to the observed motions. It was the essence of his theory that the average kinetic energy of agitation of the

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[7] Clark: p.88. Robert Brown: *Philosophical Magazine, Pt.4, 1828.*

[8] Clark: p.88: Einstein & Infeld, *The Evolution of Physics,* p.64.

particles would be exactly the same as the roughly known energy of agitation in a gas molecule. So, by observing the motion of the microscopically visible particles, much valuable information could be obtained about the invisible molecules. In this way Einstein was able to derive a formula which stated that the average displacement of the particles in any direction increases as the square root of the time taken for observation. He showed, too, how one can determine the number of molecules in a unit volume by measuring the distances travelled by the visible particles.

Einstein thus proved in theory that molecules existed, even though at that time they remained invisible to the human eye, existing microscopes and current methods of observations. This paper had a profound effect on scientific methodology in general, which again led to "God playing dice.." As Max Born pointed out: "The accuracy of measurement depends on the sensitivity of the instruments, and this again on the size and weight of the mobile parts, and the restoring forces acting on them. Before Einstein's work it was tacitly assumed that progress in this direction was limited only by experimental technique. Now it became obvious that this was not so. If an indicator, like the needle of a galvanometer, became too small or the suspending fibre too thin, it would never be at rest but perform a kind of

Brownian movement. This has in fact been observed. Similar phenomena play a large part in modern electronic technique, where the limit of observation is given by irregular observations which can be heard as a "noise" in a loudspeaker. There is a limit of observability given by the laws of nature themselves."[9]

The fourth paper Einstein mentioned was, in fact, his Special Theory of Relativity, called "On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies." In many ways it was one of the most remarkable scientific papers that had ever been written. It was some nine thousand words long, an essay or article, not a book, it had no notes and references to give it weight, excepting Einstein's mention of the valuable suggestions made by his friend and colleague, M. Besso. (Later, Besso said : "Einstein the eagle took Besso the sparrow under his wing. Then the sparrow fluttered a little higher.") It demonstrated unequivocally the limitations of Classical physics, and radically altered Man's ideas of space, time and the Universe. There is an immense amount of literature and exegesis surrounding this paper, popped casually into a science periodical in 1905.

Einstein, in this paper, linked two assumptions - those of the similarity of all natural laws for all observers, and the

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[9] Max Born, *Natural Philosophy of Cause & Chance*,p.64.

constancy of the speed of light. He explained that an observer in a state of rest in a particular frame of reference will not see light sources, or objects, at exactly the same time as a moving observer would from his frame of reference. {3} The difference in the observations made to support this theory have proved correct. The old idea of simultaneity (that events in different fields take place at exactly the same time) is dethroned. "So we see that we cannot attach any absolute signification to the concept of simultaneity, but that two events which, viewed from a system of coordinates, are simultaneous, can no longer be looked upon as simultaneous events when envisaged from a system which is in motion relatively to that system."[10] One man's "now" frame of reference is another man's "then" frame of reference.

The constant factor in Einstein's theory was the speed of light. All that was needed, Einstein went on to demonstrate, were the Lorentz transformation equations. Using these instead of the earlier and simpler Newtonian transformations, it was still possible to connect events in any two frames of reference, whatever the difference in their relative speeds, whether it was shipdecks and jettys, or trains and platforms, or between a

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[10] Clark: p.119. Electrodynamik bewegter Korper, *Annalen der physik*, Ser.4, 1905.

physicist in the laboratory and the electrons of atomic experiments which were already known to move at a sizable proportion of the speed of light. It appears that when the physicist talks of his electrons which travel so much faster, he speaks of "fields", and not frames of reference.

BUT in resolving this difference between two conceptions of simultaneity, it had to be admitted that if the constancy of the speed of light was allowed to restore order from chaos, then not one but two factors in the equations were different from the simple stable things that man had always imagined. For velocity is provided by distance divided by time, and if velocity was invariant in the Lorentz transformations not only distance but time itself must be variable. If the Newtonian world of mechanics as well as the Maxwellian world of electromagnetism were subject to the invariant velocity of light, both distance - or space - and time were no longer absolute.[11] {4}

Einstein said later that "the theory of relativity was nothing more than a further consequential development of the field theory. ..."He had discovered it because he was so firmly

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[11] Clark: p.120.

convinced of the harmony of the universe."[12] He also said that the four men who laid the foundations of physics on which he had been able to construct his theory were Galileo, Newton, Maxwell and Lorentz. The new feature of Einstein's work was the realization of the fact that the Lorentz transformation transcended its connections with Maxwell's equations and was concerned with the nature of space and time in general. The Times commented on May 25, 1931 that the genius of Einstein consisted in taking up the uninterpreted experiments and scattered suggestions of his predecessors, and welding them into a comprehensive scheme that wins universal admiration by its simplicity and beauty.

The "comprehensive scheme" of 1905 was to be taken further. Einstein had shown that space and time were theoretically changeable, depending upon relative motion - two of the three absolutely measurable yardsticks of the physical world. The third one was mass. He wondered if mass too could be linked with the speed of light. Einstein considered the question. He wrote another letter to Habicht, apparently in the summer of 1905, again, casual to the n-th degree. After suggesting that Habicht

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[12] Clark: p.127. Einstein, "Fundamental concepts of Physics & their most recent Changes", lecture given at Davos Hochschule, printed ST. Louis Post-Dispatch, Dec. 29, 1928 & Reichenbach, quoted Valentin, p.106.

might like to join him in the Patent Office, he added: "You don't need to bother about valuable time, there is not always a subtle theme to meditate upon. At least, not an exciting one. There is, of course, the theme of spectral lines, but I do not think that a simple connection of these phenomena with those already explored exists; so that for the moment the thing does not seem to show very much promise. However, a result of the electrodynamic work has come to my mind. The relativity principle in connection with the Maxwell equations demands that the mass is a direct measure for the energy contained in the bodies; light transfers mass. A remarkable decrease of the mass must result in radium. This thought is amusing and infectious but I cannot possibly know whether the good Lord does not laugh at it and has led me up the garden path."[13]

In the Autumn of 1905, almost as a footnote to his earlier paper, in the *Annalen de Physik*, he published his fifth paper of that year. "The results of the previous investigation lead to a very interesting conclusion, which is here to be deduced. ..... If a body gives off the energy L in the form of radiation, its mass diminishes by L/c2. The fact that the energy withdrawn from the body becomes energy of radiation evidently makes no difference,

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[13] Clark: p.131. Einstein-Habicht, Summer 1905, Seelig, p.76. Neither original nor copy of this letter appears to exist in either the Princeton or the ETH archives.

so that we are led to the more general conclusion that : The mass of a body is a measure of its energy content; if the energy changes by L, the mass changes in the same sense by L/9 x 10 20, the energy being measured in ergs, and the mass in grams." He concluded with the comment that this theory might be tested by the use of radium salts, whose energy content was variable, and that radiation appeared to convey inertia between emitting and absorbing bodies.[14]

The second equation in this paper follows on from the fact that the motion whose increase raises the mass of a body is a form of energy. This is the famous E = mc2, which states, in the shorthand of science, that the energy contained in matter is equal in ergs to its mass in grams multiplied by the square of the velocity of light in centimeters per second. .. i.e. a very small amount of mass is equivalent to a vast amount of energy.

This addition to his electrodynamic paper explained electrons weighing more when moving than when at rest, the ejection of particles at high speeds for long periods - high energy for small loss of mass - and also the sun, to continue radiating light and heat while losing very little mass.

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[14] Clark: p.132. Einstein: "Ist die Tragheit Eines Korpers von seinem Energieinhalt Abhangig?" *Annalen der Physik*, Ser.4., Vol. 8, 1905, pp. 639-641.

The difference in mass was another of those little inconsistencies, noticed in various forms by Thomson of Cambridge, Kaufmann of Gottingen, Lorentz, Hasenohrl and Poincare. Thus the photons, or light quanta, of the photoelectric effect were particles which had converted to energy a small portion of their mass, which was travelling with the speed of light; while energy below the speed of light had transformed back into mass by its slowing down. The new theory also linked previously separate concepts of conservation of energy and conservation of matter. Until this time, man had been ignorant of the difference in mass of a body in movement and at rest. He was ignorant, too, of the changes in space and time. But these changes are too small for human senses to register.

Forty years later, the facts of nature as revealed by Einstein's equation were to be demonstrated in another way. For by then it had been discovered that if the nucleus of a heavy atom could be split into two parts the mass of its two fragments would be less than that of the original nucleus. The difference in mass would have been transformed into energy; its amount would be minute, but the energy released would be this minute mass multiplied by the square of the speed of light. The energy released from nuclei by the fission process destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

After the publication of the 1905 papers, Einstein became a lecturer in Berne, preparatory to being accepted onto the Swiss Polytechnic's staff. He went on to formulate the principle of equivalence, and Minkowski gave mathematical form to Special Relativity. Special Theory showed that movement was relative to its frame of reference, whether the stars in their courses or electrons in an atom. But he had only dealt with motion in a straight line and at a constant velocity. What about acceleration and deceleration? What about constant circular motion? What happens to bodies inside a frame of reference? (e.g. a train with bodies and glasses of water in it) when non-relative motion applied to them? This discrepancy between the relativity of uniform motion and the apparent non-relativity of non-uniform motion, between the fact that the first has no meaning unless it is compared to something else, while the second is self-evident within its own frame of reference, greatly worried him.

Einstein went to Prague in 1909, where he became friends with George Pick, who suggested that he would find the non-Euclidean calculus of Ricci and Levi-Civita suitable for what he wanted to express. He did not stay long in Prague before he moved to Berlin, where this work was eventually completed in Germany

during the First World War.

END NOTE FROM P. 524:

1. Papers published in *Annalen der Physik,* Ser.4, Vol. 17, 1905, by Albert Einstein:

"Uber Einen de Erzeugung und Werwandlung des Lichtes Betreffenden Heuristichen Gesichtspunkt." Pp. 132-148.

"Uber die von der molekularkinetischen Theorie der Warme geforderte Bewegung von in ruhenden Flussigkeiten suspendierten Teilchen." pp. 549-560.

"Zur Electrodynamik bewegter Korper." pp. 891-921.

Published in *Annalen der Physik*, Ser.4, Vol. 18, 1905:

"Ist die Tragheit eines Korpers von Seinem Energieinhalt abhangig?" pp. 639-641.

2. END NOTE; PAGE 529. Kinetic Theory of Matter: A mathematical explanation of the behaviour of (gases) on the assumption that (gases) consist of molecules in ceaseless motion in space, the Kinetic energy of the molecules depending upon the temperature of the (gas); the molecules are considered to be perfectly elastic particles that collide with each other and with the walls of the containing vessel. The pressure exerted by a gas on the walls of the vessel is due to the collisions of the molecules with it. The gas laws may be shown to be in full agreement with this theory.

3. END NOTE: PAGE 532 . Example given in Clark: consider Newton's sailor standing on the deck as his ship sails parallel to a long jetty. At each end of the jetty there stands a signal lamp and midway between the two lamps there stands an observer. As the sailor passes the observer, flashes of light are sent out by the two lamps. They are sent out, so far as the stationary observer on the jetty is concerned, at exactly the same time. The light rays coming from each end of the jetty have to travel the same distance to reach him, and they will reach him simultaneously. So far, so good. But what about the sailor on the ship - who will have been an equal distance from both lamps as each sent out its light signal? He knows that both flashes travel with the same speed. Although this speed is very great it is finite, and since he is moving away from one lamp and towards the other he will receive the light signals at different times. AS far as he is concerned, they will not have been switched on simultaneously.2

4. END NOTE: PAGE 533. In a Newtonian world, three questions of philosophical import arise: First, Which is the REAL dimension and which is the REAL time? Second, Why hadn't man noticed this before? Thirdly, What difference will this make to the world?

Clark's answers: 1: Real dimension and real time is that of the observer. Stationary or moving, the observers are concerned with their own frames of reference. Individuality: Just as beauty lies in the eye of the beholder, so does each man carry with him his own space and his own time. 2: The human physiological apparatus is too insensitive to record the extremely minute changes in space and time which are produced by exceptionally high speeds. And Clark goes on to explain how limited the senses are in a normal human being. Therefore a normal human being is highly selective, and does not physically experience speeds comparable to that of light. Nature educates up to the level of everyday life. Lindemann (Churchill's advisor and Einstein's friend) said, "It is precisely because the old conceptions are so nearly right, because we have not personal experience of their being inaccurate in every day life, that our so-called common sense revolts when we are asked to give them up. And that we tend to attribute to them a significance infinitely beyond their deserts."

ALBERT EINSTEIN

PART III

There were eleven years between the Special Theory and the General Theory of Relativity. Einstein's General Theory of Relativity was published early 1916, in Volume 49 of *Annalen der Physik*. Max Born said, "The theory appeared to me then, and it still does, the greatest feat of human thinking about nature, the most amazing combination of philosophical penetration, physical intuition, and mathematical skill. But its connections with experience were slender. It appealed to me like a great work of art, to be enjoyed and admired from a distance."[1]

Einstein's General Theory of Relativity grew naturally and logically from his body of work, justifiably called his masterpiece. In the space of a few years he transcended the Newtonian model time and again, and his work has given rise to an immeasurable increase in knowledge. It is arguable that his mental achievements are comparable to the greatest minds who have

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[1] Clark: p.252. Born, *Physica Acta*, p. 253.

ever lived - including Aristotle and Plato.

Einstein made almost a "quantum leap" in levels of mathematical abstraction. "The early Einstein papers seem to be rooted in a sort of clairvoyant view of the meaning of physical phenomena. ...He is guided not by experiments - the experiments came several years after the theory had been published - but by the philosophical or epistemological principles. ...In fact in some bizarre sense his 'method' has more in common with the philosophical attitudes of Plato, with the Platonic emphasis on perfect shapes and forms, than with any physicist one can think of since and including Newton."[2]

Einstein said: "Our experience hitherto justified us in believing that nature is the realization of the simplest conceivable mathematical ideas. I am convinced that we can discover, by means of purely mathematical constructions, those concepts and those lawful connections between them which furnish the key to the understanding of natural phenomena. Experience may suggest the appropriate mathematical concepts, but they most certainly cannot be deduced from it. Experience remains, of course, the sole criterion of physical utility of a mathematical

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[2] Bernstein: p.105.

construction. But the creative principle resides in mathematics. In a certain sense, therefore, I hold it true that pure thought can grasp reality, as the ancients dreamed."[3] However one puts it, Einstein was the greatest known abstract thinker.

The Newtonian concept - or Classical physics - held that space, time, matter were separate and invariable. Space was thought of in the same way. Mass was as absolute and unchanging, mechanically added to or diminished. Gravity was a force holding bodies together but repelling at a distance. Sound waves stopped dead when there was no air for them in which to beat. Light, electricity and magnetism were assumed to need a similar medium. Nothing could propagate or travel without a medium to support it, hence the postulation of "ether". As measurements and calculations became finer and finer, so these entrenched maxims greatly hindered problem-solving.

Einstein said: "If mechanics was to be maintained as the foundation of physics, Maxwell's equations had to be interpreted mechanically [i.e. in terms of the ether]. This was zealously

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[3] Bernstein: p.105: Relativity Theory: Its Origins and Impact on Modern Thought. Edited L.Pearce Williams. Albert Einstein: Herbert Spencer Lecture, Oxford, June 1933, "The Method of Theoretical Physics."

but fruitlessly attempted, while the equations were proving themselves fruitful in mounting degree. One got used to operating with these [electric and magnetic] fields as independent substances without finding it necessary to give one's self an account of their mechanical nature; thus mechanics as the basis of physics was being abandoned, almost unnoticeably, because its adaptability to the facts presented itself finally as hopeless."[4] And in his 1905 paper, he said, "The introduction of a "luminiferous ether" will prove to be superfluous inasmuch as the view here to be developed will not require an "absolutely stationary space". As he threw out concept of ether he was actually throwing out mechanical physics. It was not time and space which were constant and unchanging, it was the speed of light. There is no fixed point in the universe at which a scientist can say: "All measurements for everything are taken from HERE." Every frame or field moves in relationship to other frames or fields.

The speed of light is constant, i.e. it is the same no matter where or how fast the light source is going with respect to the observer. The expansion and contraction of time and length that a constant speed of light gave rise to, were contained in the

[4] Bernstein: p.76: Schilpp, ALBERT EINSTEIN; PHILOSOPHER-SCIENTIST 25-26.

Lorentz transformation equations. {[1]}. " ..any model of matter consistent with Einstein's postulates must produce the Lorentz contraction. The Maxwell equations are invariant under the Lorentz transformations, which is the mathematically precise way of saying that they satisfy the relativity principle. Hence an electrodynamic model must have the Lorentz contraction as a feature. But so will any other model that is relativistically invariant. .... In particular, since velocity is the ratio of distance to time and since both distance and time are affected by the Lorentz transformation, one would expect that velocity would also be affected. This is the case, and Newton's addition theorem for velocities is modified in such a way that any velocity added to the velocity of light is still the velocity of light, which is another way of saying that a material object cannot overtake a light ray."[5]

Which brings us to Einstein's revolutionary thoughts about mass. Inertial mass and gravitational mass are the same. Einstein turned his attention to mass. (Annalen der Physik, Vol 18, 1905) He imagined an atom, or some other particle, that decayed radioactively by emitting light radiation - gamma rays. By applying the principle that energy and momentum had to be

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[5] Bernstein: p.79.

conserved in the decay and by making an ingenious use of the Lorentz transformation, he was able to argue that the atom that was left after the decay had to be less massive than the original atom. Furthermore, the amount of mass that was lost was just equal to the total energy carried away by the radiation, divided by the square of the velocity of light.[6] He ended the paper: "It is not impossible that with bodies whose energy-content is variable to a high degree (e.g. with radium salts) the theory may be successfully put to the test."[7] And from there it was a short step to E = mc2.

Gravity is a function of mass, not charge, and the more mass there is - quantity or density, the larger the inertia and gravity. Gravity is electrically neutral, i.e. an atom with all its electrons, positrons and neutrons is electrically neutral. Atoms making up a planet are largely complete and therefore the bodies they make, e.g. planets, are electrically neutral too. Strong electrical forces hardly react to gravity.

This sameness of inertial and gravitational mass led to Einstein's Principle of Equivalence, and his paper published in

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[6] Bernstein: 84: this equation is written: m = E/c2.

[7] Principle of Relativity, p.71.

1911. It states that the effects of a uniform constant acceleration on an observer or his measuring instruments are indistinguishable from - that is, equivalent to - the observer's being at rest but acted on by a uniform field of gravitation. {[2]}

The principle of equivalence suggests that light should be affected by gravity, rather than accurate descriptions of how light behaves in a gravitational field. Einstein, in the 1911 paper, used the Newtonian gravitational force law to compute the trajectories of light rays in a Newtonian gravitational field. When he later modified Newton's law of gravity, he of course had to redo this early computation, using the gravitational dynamics of the 1916 paper. The essence of Einstein's new view was that there was a hitherto unsuspected connection between the geometry of space-time and gravitation. If light beams did not obey a Euclidean geometry in the presence of gravitation then physical geometry had to be modified. Because gravity is a weak force, the effects were small, but measurable nonetheless. i.e. the sun bends light. The equations Einstein used in this new approach determined the geometry of space-time. In the presence of gravitation the geometry of space time is altered from the Euclidean, and is sometimes expressed as "warped", or "curved". In fact the new theory predicted that there should be an apparent shift in the position of the stars whose light passes close to

the sun's surface of 1.74 seconds of arc, which is twice as much as the Newtonian theory used in Einstein's 1911 paper.

"In a memoir published four years ago, I tried to answer the question whether the propagation of light is influenced by gravitation. I return to this theme, because my previous presentation of the subject does not satisfy me, and for a stronger reason, because I now see that one of the most important consequences of my former treatment is capable of being tested experimentally. For it follows from the theory here to be brought forward, that rays of light, passing close to the sun, are deflected by its gravitational field, so that the angular distance between the sun and a fixed star appearing near to it is apparently increased by nearly a second of arc." [8] {3}

Another element in the 1916 paper was the postulation which became the "Einsteinian shift". Atomic electrons when they jump from one orbit to another give off light with characteristic frequencies - i.e. colours. These "spectra" are used to identify chemical substances, and in particular spectral lines have been used, since the mid-nineteenth century, to identify the elements

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[8] Clark: p.181. On the Influence of Gravitation on the Propagation of Light, *Annalen der Phuysik*, Ser. 4, Vol. 35, 1911, p.898-908.

in stars and, of course, the sun. These atomic vibrations are also a kind of clock, and according to the General Theory of Relativity, they should slow down when the atoms are in the strong gravitational fields at the surface of stars. Hence the light beams passing close to large masses should be shifted to the red, since red light has a smaller frequency than, say, blue light. {4}

Einstein wrote to his son Eduard: "When a blind beetle crawls over the surface of a globe, he does not notice that the track he has covered is curved. I was lucky enough to have spotted it."[9] And: The old theory is a special limiting case of the new one. If the gravitational forces are comparatively weak, the old Newtonian law turns out to be a good approximation to support the new laws of gravitation. Thus all observations which support the classical theory also support the General Relativity theory. We regain the old theory from the higher level of the new one.[10]

It has long been known that the Sun is not the only influence on planets. They influence each other by their mutual gravitation.

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[9] Clark: p.254: Seelig: p. 80.

[10] *Einstein & Infeld, pp. 251-252]* Clark p:257.

Planetary influences on other planetary orbits are called perturbations. They are small, but can add up in such a way that the whole system is unstable, or certainly not repetitively mechanical. Planetary orbits did not close, and although the variation in "starting point" was small (43.seconds of arc per century) over and above what could be accounted for by Newtonian gravitation, taking into account all of the perturbing effects of the known planets. It was thought that there was a hidden planet called Vulcan. Einstein's General Theory of Relativity predicts exactly this perihelion advance for Mercury. Also using his theory, the Sun's gravitational effect on light, radar, etc. can be computed, which answers are in agreement with experiment.

Einstein himself suggested that this theory be tested with the total eclipse which occurred in March, 1919. On September 27, 1919, Lorentz cabled Einstein from Leiden:
"Eddington found star displacement at rim of sun, preliminary measurements between nine-tenths of a second and twice that value."

Which meant that the General Theory of Relativity was vindicated. In Holland, in Leiden, it was hardly remarked at all. But on November 6, 1919, Fellows of Royal and Royal Astronomical Societies met in Burlington House to hear official results of two

eclipse expeditions. Dyson read the English reports on behalf of himself, Eddington, and Davidson ..... "Thus the results of the expeditions to Sobral and Principe, leave little doubt that a deflection of light takes place in the neighbourhood of the sun and that it is of the amount demanded by Einstein's generalized theory of relativity as attributable to the sun's gravitational field." The aim of the operation had been to test Einstein's theory, and rumours were rife in the scientific world. Here, if nowhere else, men were aware that an age was ending, and the main hall of the Society was crowded. J.J. Thomson, now president of the Royal Society, James Jeans, and Lindemann were present. So were Sir Oliver Lodge and the mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead. How much of a "jiggle" was the proof or otherwise of Einstein's General Theory going to give to existing thought?

A.N. Whitehead: "The whole atmosphere of tense interest was exactly that of the Greek drama. We were the chorus commenting on the decree of destiny as disclosed in the development of a supreme incident. There was dramatic quality in the very staging - the traditional ceremonial, and in the background the picture of Newton to remind us that the greatest of scientific generalizations was now, after more than two centuries, to receive its first modification. Nor was the personal interest

wanting; a great adventure in thought had at length come safe to shore."[11]

The Times said that Einstein's theory dealt with the fabric of the universe. A reporter asked Einstein: "Can you explain Relativity in a few sentences?"
"If you will not take the answer too seriously, and consider it only as a kind of joke, than I can explain it as follows," he said. "It was formerly believed that if all material things disappeared out of the universe, time and space would be left. According to the relativity theory, however, time and space disappear together with the things."[12]

In 1917, Einstein wrote a paper titled "Cosmological Considerations on the General Theory of Relativity." At that time, all astronomical evidence pointed to a static universe- which Newton had assumed. This theory was subsequently proved to be wrong - Eddington showed that, in fact, the solution was not really static in the sense that if the universe received any slight jiggle anywhere, it would start to expand or contract. Solutions to Einstein's equations reckoned on static universe,

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[11] A.N. Whitehead: Science and the Modern World: p.13

[12] Clark: p.469.

filled with a small uniform density of matter. He speculated on its physical extent. A light ray started at any point in the universe would return to its starting point, according to this picture, in about 10 billion years. Slowly more and more evidence, theoretical and practical, was accumulated to argue that the universe was expanding.

However, with his field equations Einstein had given a numerical quantity to account for the centrifugal force (again-postulated by Newton) of the surrounding stars in action. He had linked the distant twinkle of the night sky with the homely gravity of everyday life and one question quickly followed: Were there enough stars in the universe to produce the centrifugal force which could be observed and recorded? The need to answer this question inexorably drew Einstein into thinking about a specific extension of the question to which he was devoting his life. He now needed to know not merely how God made the world but also about its actual extent. Thus the relativisitic cosmology which Einstein now worked on was a natural offshoot of the General Theory, and was a "superstructure including other principles".[13] If it was not suitable, it did not necessarily invalidate the General Theory itself.

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[13] Hubble: Clark: p.266.

Einstein asked if was it possible to conceive of a universe that would contain a finite number of stars distributed equally through unbounded space. Einstein's own inner intuition said that if the laws of nature must be the same for all observers, so must the view of the universe.

Max Born: This suggestion of a finite, but unbounded space is one of the greatest ideas about the nature of the world which ever has been conceived. It solved the mysterious fact why the system of stars did not disperse and thin out which it would do if space were infinite; it gave a physical meaning to Mach's principle which postulated that the law of inertia should not be regarded as a property of empty space but as an effect of the total system of stars, and it opened the way to the modern concept of the expanding universe."[14]

Einstein's theories inexorably threatened classical causality, which held that if one understood the laws of nature and had sufficient facts, events followed logically and inevitably. This threat he found uncomfortable. On a fundamental level he FELT that physics should be predictable from causal laws, and

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[14] Max Born: *Physica Acta, p. 254.* Clark: p.271.

expressible in elegant maths. It was becoming apparent that events could not always be determined, neither in the laboratory nor through the whole range of human experience. The history of Quantum Mechanics which followed has endorsed this. The behaviour of electrons defied causality. They could only be "predicted" statistically, and any causality was totally obscured. At any level, might not the whole conception of causality in the universe be merely an illusion?

"The question of causality worries me also a lot," he had written on January 27, 1920, to Max Born: "Will the quantum absorption and emission of light ever be grasped in the sense of complete causality, or will there remain a statistical residue? I have to confess that I lack the courage of conviction. However, I should be very loath to abandon complete causality....".[15]

Einstein himself furthered the theme of matter waves (developed by de Broglie and Bose) in two papers. Over a period of a few years, the electron emerged as having wave AND particle properties, and its probable form could be predicted only

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[15] Clark: p.406: Letters published in Briefwechsel 1916-1956 Albert Einstein/Max Born (Munich, Nyumphenburger, 1969; London, Macmillan, 1970)]

statistically. Einstein said to Infeld: "Yes, I may have started it, but I regarded these ideas as temporary. I never thought that others would take them so much more seriously than I did." And to Max Born: December 12, 1926: "Quantum mechanics is certainly imposing. But an inner voice tells me that it is not yet the real thing. The theory says a lot, but does not really bring us any closer to the secret of the Old One. I, at any rate, am convinced that he does not throw dice."

Later, written to James Frank: "I can, if the worst comes to the worst, still realize that the Good Lord may have created a world in which there are no natural laws. In short, a chaos. But that there should be statistical laws with definite solutions, i.e. laws which compel the Good Lord to throw the dice in each individual case, I find highly disagreeable."[16]

Yet the opposition which he maintained so stubbornly towards the indeterminacy of quantum mechanics was not based entirely on his inability to "see" it as he had "seen" many other innovations in physics. It was based on something more fundamental, upon an interior assumption about the world that had much more resemblance to religious faith than to the ever-questioning

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[16] Seelig, P. 209.

scepticism of science. Einstein believed that the universe had been designed so that its workings could be comprehensible; therefore these workings must conform to discoverable laws; thus there was no room for chance and indeterminacy - God, after all, did not play the game that way. At a different level he stressed these beliefs in an interview in October, 1929, when the argument about quantum mechanics was at its height. "I claim credit for nothing." he said at a mention of his modesty. "everything is determined, the beginning as well as the end, by forces over which we have no control. It is determined for the insect as well as for the star. Human beings, vegetables, or cosmic dust, we all dance to a mysterious tune, intoned in the distance by an invisible piper."[17]

He collapsed in the spring of 1928, due to an over-strained heart. From then on he concentrated on formulating a Unified Field Theory.

"For years it has been my greatest ambition to resolve the duality of natural laws into unity. This duality lies in the fact that physicists have hitherto been compelled to postulate two sets of laws - those which control gravitation and those

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[17] Saturday Evening Post, October 26, 1929, p. 17.

which control the phenomena of electricity and of magnetism... Many physicists have suspected that two sets of laws must be based upon one general law, but neither experiment nor theory has, until now, succeeded in formulating this law. I believe now that I have found a proper form. I have thought out a special construction which is differentiated from that of my relativity theory, and from other theories of four-dimensional space, through certain conditions. These conditions bring under the same mathematical equations the laws which govern the electromagnetic field and those which govern the field of gravitation. The relativity theory reduced to one formula all the laws which govern space, time and gravitation, and thus it corresponded to the demand for simplification of our physical concepts. The purpose of my work is to further this simplification, and particularly to reduce further this to one formula the explanation of the field of gravity and of the field of electromagnetism. For this reason I call it a contribution to "a unified field theory." ... Now, but only now, we know that the force which moves electrons in their ellipses about the nuclei of atoms is the same force which moves our earth in its annual course about the sun, and is the same force which brings to us the rays of light and heat which make life possible upon

this planet."[18]

END NOTES:

[18] Clark: p.494: Daily Chronicle, January 26, 1929.

1. Lorentz-Fitzgerald contraction: A contraction in the legth of a moving object..to account for the negative result of the Michelson-Morely experiment. The contraction is ony appreciable at velocities comparable to the velocity of light and was given a theoretical explanation by Einstein in his special theory of relativity.

Lorentz transformations: A set of equations for correlating space and time co-ordinates in two frames of reference, especially at relativistic velocities.

2. Bernstein 101: To see what this principle of equivalence means we can imagine ourselves in what has come to be known as an "Einstein elevator." This is a closed box sitting in space somewhere which can be tugged, say, 'up,' by someone outside pulling on a rope, attached to the roof, with a constant force. The occupants of the elevator will feel themselves pressed 'down' toward the floor, and the principle of equivalence asserts that this force downward is identical to that which can be produced by a suitably constructed uniform gravitational field acting 'downward' on a stationary elevator. The people inside the elevator will not be able to tell which situation they are experiencing. This law implies the equivalence of gravitational and inertial mass, since in effect it equates a gravitational and inertial force. Let us imagine the following situation: an elevator is attached to its rope and being pulled upward with a constant force and hence a uniform acceleration. We are stationed outside the elevator in the 'rest frame' with respect to which the elevator is accelerating. We now fire a beam of light from our rest frame in such a way that the light enters the elevator - by a small window, if you will - on a trajectory that is initially parallel to the elevator floor. What we will observe happening is the floor of the elevator accelerating upward toward the light beam. To us in our rest frame the light ray follows a straight line, while to the people in the elevator the light beam will appear to have been bent down toward the floor in an arc. But if they do not 'know' that they are being pulled up, they can, according to the principle of equivalence, conclude that there is a uniform gravitational field in their region of space which is bending the light downward in a curved path. At first look, this seems very strange, because from a Newtonian point of view only objects with mass are acted upon by gravity. Hence if a contradiction with the principle of equivalence is to be avoided, it must be that beams of light propagate in a gravitaational field as if they had gravitational mass. But this, Einstein pointed out, is to be expected from the mass-energy relationship, E = mc2, of the special theory of relativity. Light beams

certainly transport energy - light from the sun, after all heats the earth. Hence, Einstein argued, if the energy content of the light is E, then its equivalent gravitational mass must be E/c2.

3. Clark: p.182. If light is produced in a star or in the Sun, an area of strong gravity, and then streams down on the Earth, an area of weak gravity, its energy will not be dissipated by a reduction of speed, since this is impossible, light always having the same constant speed. What would happen, Einstein postulated, was something very different: the wavelength of the light would be changed. This "Einstein shift", the assumption that the spectral lines of sunlight, as compared with the corresponding spectral lines of terrestrial sources of light, must be somewhat displaced toward the red," was spelled out in some detail. However he was careful to add the qualification that "as other influences (pressure, temperature) affect the position of the centers of the spectral lines, it is difficult to discover whether the infra red influence of the gravitational potential really exists." He ended this paper with the idea that if gravity does bend light, the plant Jupiter should displace light to nearly a minute of arc. "...for apart from any theory there is the question whether it is possible with the equipment at present available to detect an influence of gravitational fields on the propagation of light." Clark: p.182.

4. Pound, at Stanford, California, experimented with light falling down a 74-foot tower. The light fell down it towards gravitational pull, and was disturbed towards the blue shift because the frequency was increased with the gravitational pull. The frequency of light should lower when coming from a distance undisturbed by gravity.

EINSTEIN'S GENERAL PHILOSOPHY.

PART IV

Einstein's new ideas reverberated round the intellectual world. Time was dethroned - Schrodinger called it being freed from an eternal tyrant. Einstein became a prophet, a messiah, he said it was difficult to be a Jewish saint. Scientific renown came just as events in Germany and elsewhere pushed him into a political activity for which he had little aptitude.

He was among the 100 intellectuals who in December 1918 signed the Petition du Comite de la Federation des Peuples, addressed to the heads of state about to meet in Versailles for the Peace Conference and prophetically asking them to "make a peace that does not conceal a future war."[1]

Just as there were no absolutes in time and space, so was there nothing immutable about the attitudes that men should take up when dealing with the kaleidoscopic, irrational, and infinitely complicated actions of their fellowmen. Circumstances, Einstein felt, could alter situations, and he was therefore flexible in

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[1] Clark: p.274.

front of individual incidence. This gave rise to a lot of criticism, because he did not appear committed to a single-minded view. The best-known examples were his brands of pacifism and conscientious objection.

"My pacifism is an instinctive feeling, a feeling that possesses me because the murder of men is disgusting. My attitude is not derived form any intellectual theory but is based on my deepest antipathy to every kind of cruelty and hatred. ... I am an absolute pacifist."[2]

From 1920 to 1928 his pacifist views were more or less uncomplicated. He advocated refusal of participation in direct or indirect war, for whatever reason. However, in the face of the rise of Nazism, Einstein's pacifism became qualified. He did not see the modification of his beliefs as a loss of integrity or double standards. He saw it as educated common sense. Einstein began to think that perhaps there were evils which must be checked. Einstein was accused of not grasping the logical position of the absolutist who refused all service under a system of military conscription. But he was never ever an absolutist. He understood, though. It was his intuition and reasoning told

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[2] Clark: p.427: Paul Hutchinson, Christian Century, July/August, 1929.

him that as ever, absolutist behaviour does not always produce the required result.

When he saw the Germans invading Belgium during the Second World War he felt that fighting to defend one's country from an aggressor was to be commended, in fact must be done. So too, there is criticism levelled at him for not speaking out about the development of the atom bomb. He saw too clearly what would happen to the world if Nazi-Germany were not contained. Individual freedom from coercion would not exist, in any form. He warned the President that the German scientists were trying to develop the atom bomb. And he made no attempts whatsoever to stop the Americans doing the same.

Einstein modified his views with changing circumstances, and refused to "go to the wall" for any of the extreme degrees of pacifism. He was very much "for" conscientious objection against fighting, but was not against doing alternative services. He was against war, but realized, when Belgium was over-run by Nazis, that it could be necessary under conditions of overt aggression.

In the Born-Einstein letters, Einstein recalls (in 1944) "the occasion some twenty-five years ago when we went together by tram

to the Reichstag building, convinced that we could effectively help to turn the people there into honest democrats? How naive we were, for all our forty years. I have to laugh when I think of it."[3] He was laughing about his own and Born's innocence in believing in the strength of reason over emotion. Max Born explained later:

Towards the end of 1918, Einstein had telephoned him to report that a student council had been formed at the university. One of its first actions had been to depose and lock up the Rector and some other dignitaries. Einstein had been asked to negotiate the with the "council" in order to bring about the release of the prisoners and the restoration of reasonable order. He asked Max Born to accompany him, and together with the psychologist Max Wertheimer they set out for the Reichstag. There was a heavy crowd and until Einstein was recognised, they could not get into the council. "The Chairman greeted us politely, and asked us to sit down and wait until an important point in the new statutes for the university had been dealt with. So we patiently waited and listened. Eventually the point at issue was settled and the Chairman said: 'Before we come to your request, Professor Einstein, may I be permitted to ask what you think of the new regulations for the students?' Einstein thought for several minutes, and then said something like this: 'I have

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[3] Born-Einstein Letters: No.81, 7 Sept., 1944. p.148.

always thought that the German universities' most valuable institution is academic freedom, whereby the lecturers are in no way told what to teach, and the students are able to choose which lectures to attend, without much supervision and control. Your new statutes seem to abolish all this and to replace it by precise regulations. I would be very sorry if the old freedom were to come to an end.' Whereupon the high-and-mighty young gentleman sat in perplexed silence."[4] Einstein, Born and Wertheimer discharged their business, got what they wanted, i.e. the release of the Rector and his colleagues, and walked home elated with their success. "In those days," says Born, "we believed in the triumph of reason, of the 'brain'. We had yet to learn that it is not the brain which controls human beings but the spinal cord - seat of the instincts and blind passions. Even scientists are no exception to this."

In the same letter to Born, Einstein goes on:
"I have to recall this now [the student council incident], to prevent me from repeating the tragic mistakes of those days. We really should not be surprised that scientists (the vast majority of them) are no exception to this rule [that they are ruled by the instincts and blind passions equated with the spinal cord] and *if* they are different it is not due to their reasoning

[4] Born-Einstein letters: p.150.

powers but to their personal stature, as in the case of Laue. It was interesting to see the way in which he cut himself off, step by step, from the traditions of the herd, under the influence of a strong sense of justice. ..... The feeling for what ought and ought not to be grows and dies like a tree, and no fertilizer of any kind will do very much good. What the individual can do is to give a fine example, and to have the courage to uphold ethical convictions sternly in a society of cynics. I have for a long time tried to conduct myself in this way, with a varying degree of success."

After the 1914-1918 war, there were many who did not want to see war ever again. But the dreadful Treaty of Versailles was in place, with its heavy retributions and fines on Germany. These retributions were largely insisted upon by the French, in spite of Winston Churchill, Jan Smuts and Louis Botha, who worked as hard as they could to get a more reasonable deal for Germany.

The League of Nations came into being. Einstein was persuaded to go onto the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation. French representation was very powerful, Germany was not represented, except for Einstein, who was technically Swiss. Gilbert Murray, Henri Bergson and Madame Curie, Lorentz, Paul Painleve were also on the committee. Einstein accepted membership because he

thought it necessary to forward any effort to promote international co-operation. But Einstein was politically non-conformist, and his value system was uncompromisable. Culture was not taken too seriously at the League of Nations, but power politics were. Einstein deeply disapproved of this. He resigned twice, in July 1922 & March 1923, first when Walter Rathenau, a prominent Jew, was assassinated, which he saw as anti-semitism. Madame Curie "press-ganged" him into returning. Then again when the French occupied the industrial Ruhr to forcibly extract the crippling fines imposed on Germany at the Treaty of Versailles.

He was excluded from the research and experiments, but a man of his background saw clearly the potential of nuclear warfare. Indeed, in Prague, years before, a young man insisted on speaking to Einstein after his lecture. He had considered Einstein's mass-energy equation, and on its basis concluded it would be possible to use the energy locked within the atom for production of a new and immensely powerful explosive; furthermore, he had invented a machine which he claimed could help make such an explosive. Philipp Frank gives us Einstein's reaction to the student: "Calm yourself. You haven't lost anything if I don't discuss your work with you in detail. Its foolishness is evident at first glance. You cannot learn more from a longer

discussion."[5]

Much has been made of his dislike of German militarism. But for all that, he was happiest in Berlin, at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute. The life-style, the culture, the high-tensile intelligences, the beauty of his home and his work-place, the quality of the students, all suited him excellently. But when the Nazi bugbear raised its head, anti-semitism grew, freedoms disappeared, he was one of the first to recognize it and he let Berlin go, without sorrow, and no regret. He never compromised his work or his integrity. When he had "arrived", he was offered an extremely flattering post at Leiden University- complete freedom, just attached to Leiden - "in Leiden is Einstein - Einstein is in Leiden". It would have been good to be near Lorentz, de Sitter and Ehrenfest. Einstein rejected it - in revealing terms: Sept. 12, 1919. "... Your offer is so fabulous and your words are so friendly and so full of affection that you can hardly imagine how confused I have been as a result of your letter. You know, of course, how happy I am in Leiden. And you know how much I like all of you. But my position is not so simple that I can do the right thing just by following my own inclinations. I am sending you a letter that Planck wrote to me while I was in Zurich. After receiving it I promised him not to

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[5] Frank: p.221. [Clark: 331]

turn my back on Berlin unless conditions were such that he would regard such a step as natural and proper. You have hardly any idea of the sacrifices that have been made here, with the general financial situation so difficult so that it is possible for me to stay and also to support my family in Zurich. It would be doubly wrong of me if, just when my political hopes are being realized, I were to walk out unnecessarily, and perhaps *in part* for my material advantage, on the very people who have surrounded me with love and friendship and to whom my departure would be doubly painful at this time of supposed humiliation. You have no idea with what affection I am surrounded here; not all of them try only to catch the drops which my brain sweats out.

So you see how things stand with me. I can leave here only if there is a turn of events that makes it impossible for me to remain. Such a turn of events could occur. But unless it does so, my departure would be tantamount to a despicable breach of my word to Planck. I would be breaking faith and would certainly reproach myself later on. (I feel like some relic in an old cathedral - one doesn't quite know what to do with the old bones, but....).."[6]

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[6] Clark: p.282. Einstein-Ehrenfest, September 12, 1919. Planck's letter: July 20, 1919, Princeton.

He had divorced Mileva, who had stayed in Zurich with the two boys, and made over his payment to her from the Nobel Prize he won. He had promised her the money and she was quite happy to finalize the divorce before the money came through. She never questioned his trustworthiness.

Einstein travelling was a nightmare: On one visit, Ehrenfest's wife provided him with sleeping gear, pressed his second pair of trousers for him to look a little better when giving an important lecture, and was horrified to see he was wearing his unpressed ones. Slippers were "unnecessary ballast". This was the familiar Einstein *en voyage*, travelling with the minimum of baggage, forgetful of the mechanics of everyday life, and a continual worry to Elsa, (his second wife) who would pack a suitcase for his journeys only to find on his return that it had not been opened. "How lucky that my husband's head is firmly stuck on: otherwise he would no doubt have left it in Leipzig," she once wrote. "Every time that he travels complications arise... this time he left a new toothbrush and a tube of toothpaste. He could not have left anything else behind as he did not have anything else."[7]
He loathed being on display and having to do social duty. He

[7] Clark: p.333: Elsa to unidentified Correspondent. Stargardt Catalogue, NO. 384, Marburg.

never wore socks, refused flatly to buy tails, and compromised with buying a dinner jacket which he NEVER wore.

He had a streak of bloody-mindedness, a reluctance to be pushed into what he did not wish. The deep feeling behind was genuine enough: .."the feeling that pretentiousness and hypocrisy were among the ingredients of the "dressing-up" on which so much of the world insisted. Behind this gentle charade there was also an urgency which for Einstein had a particular poignancy. All those buttons; all those tails; all that putting on and taking off, wasting valuable minutes and hours while in the distance he could hear, with Marvell, "time's winged chariot hurrying near." What a waste it all was. And so with shoes, which could be replaced by sandals, and socks that could be dispensed with altogether."[8]

"I am happy because I want nothing from anyone, I do not care for money. Decorations, titles, or distinctions mean nothing to me. I do not crave praise. The only thing that gives me pleasure, apart from my work, my violin, and my sailboat, is the appreciation of my fellow workers."[9] And he said to Hedwig

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[8] Clark: p.389.

[9] George Sylvester Viereck, "What Life Means to Einstein," Saturday Evening Post, October 26, 1929.

Born: "There is nothing in the world which I could not dispense with at a moment's notice."[10] So much for Einstein's practical materialism.

Einstein was lionized, he even went to England, and stayed with Lord Haldane, a Germano-phile, and Secretary of State for War. He asked the Archbishop of Canterbury (Davidson) to dinner. Davidson said to Einstein: "Lord Haldane tells us that your theory ought to make a great difference to our morale." Einstein replied: "Do not believe a word of it. It makes no difference. It is purely abstract - science." [G.K.A. Bell, p. 1052.] ..... he took the Archbishop's interest as natural, and noted later that more clergymen than physicists were interested in relativity. "Because," he explained when asked the reason, "clergymen are interested in the general laws of nature and physicists, very often, are not."[11] He was comfortable with the existence of an abstract truth which had nothing whatever to do with the nuts and bolts of everyday life. About everyday life and relationships, he wrote to Hedwig Born in 1919:
"Now to Philosophy. What you call 'Max's materialism' is simply

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[10] Born-Einstein Letters: No.82, 9 Oct. 1944, p.152.

[11] G.K.A. Bell, p. 1052: & Philipp Frank: Einstein's philosophy of Science," Reviews of Modern Physics, Vol. 21, No. 3, July 1949, p. 349.]

the causal way of looking at things. This way of looking at things always answers only the question 'Why?', but never the question 'To what end?'. No utility principle and no natural selection will make us get over that. However, if someone asks 'To what purpose should we help one another, make life easier for each other, make beautiful music or have inspired thoughts?', he would have to be told: 'If you don't feel it, no-one can explain it to you.' Without this primary feeling we are nothing and had better not live at all. If someone wanted to make a basic investigation to prove that these things help to preserve and further human existence, then the question 'To what end?' would loom even larger, and an answer on a 'scientific' basis would be an even more hopeless task. So if we want to proceed in a scientific manner at any cost, we can try to reduce our aims to as few as possible and derive the others from them. But this will leave you cold."[12]

Rabbi Herbert Goldstein of the Institutional Synagogue New York, April 24 1929, cabled Einstein: "Do you believe in God?" "I believe in Spinoza's God who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of what exists," he replied, "not in a God who concerns

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[12] Born-Einstein Letters: No.9, 1 Sept. 1919, p.12.

himself with fates and actions of human beings."[13]

During the summer of 1930, Rabindranath Tagore, the Indian philosopher and mystic reported his conversation with Einstein in the American Hebrew, under the heading 'The Nature of Reality'. When Tagore denied that truth or beauty was independent of man, Einstein asked, "If there would be no human beings any more, the Apollo of Belvedere would no longer be beautiful?" to Tagore's "No," Einstein noted that he agreed "with regard to this conception of beauty, but not with regard to truth," adding: "I cannot prove that my conception is right, but that is my religion." The conversation, which ended with Einstein's exclamatory "then I am more religious than you are!", contained two statements of dogmatic, if intuitive faith. "I cannot prove that scientific truth must be conceived as a truth that is valid independent of reality," he said, "but I believe it firmly. I believe, for instance, that the Pythagorean theorem in geometry states something that is approximately true, independent of the existence of man. Anyway, if there is a *reality* independent of man, there is also a truth relative to this reality; and in the same way the negation of the first engenders a negation of the existence of the latter." And later he continued: "Our natural

[13] New York Times, 25 April 1929. O'Connell.

point of view in regard to the existence of truth apart from Humanity cannot be explained or proved. But it is a belief which nobody can lack - not even primitive beings. We attribute to truth a superhuman objectivity, it is indispensable for us, this reality which is independent of our existence and our experience and our minds - though we cannot say what it means." [14]

Max Born wrote: Einstein had no belief in the Church, but did not think religious faith was a sign of stupidity, nor unbelief a sign of intelligence; He knew, as did Socrates, that we know nothing. [15]

"Everything that men do or think concerns the satisfaction of the needs they feel or the escape from pain." Einstein went on to outline three states of religious development, starting with the religion of fear that moved primitive peoples, and which in due course became the moral religion whose driving force was social feelings. This in turn could become the "cosmic religious sense... which recognizes neither dogmas nor God made in man's image." ...."I assert that the cosmic religious experience is the strongest and noblest driving force behind scientific research."

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[14] American Hebrew , October 1931.

[15] Born-Einstein Letters: p.203.

... "The only deeply religious people of our largely materialistic age are the earnest men of research."[16] Einstein shows here an evolutionary trend in religious progress, where religion starts in fear, travels beyond the anthropomorphic because of reason, and then to the vast majestic cyclotron.

There are glimpses of how Einstein worked. In Berlin, his study was in a corner turret of the block, reached by a small staircase and with a view only of rooftops and the sky. Here were the expected books, a round table in the small window alcove stacked with papers, notes, references, and an assortment of pamphlets. Here also, almost hidden on top of a bookcase, was the cigar box surreptitiously filled from time to time by Einstein's friends, who knew how Elsa tried to ration him to one a day for the sake of his health. The study was Einstein's absolute preserve. No cleaner was allowed in. Neither was Elsa. "It was here that his work was done and his friends received to discuss problems without interference," Plesch has written. "It was always a matter of regret to his wife (he always referred to her as 'my old lady') that she was unable to look after him and his things in that room as everywhere else, but Einstein was adamant; never mind the dust and disorder; it was the independence that

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[16] Clark 516: Religion and Science: November 9 (No year quoted): New York Times Magazine.

mattered."[17]

Joffe, the Russian scientist, visited him in Berlin to describe his recent work on the mechanical and electrical properties of crystals.

"He asked me to explain in detail. I remember that I arrived at his house about three o'clock and began the account of my work. After about an hour his wife came in and asked Einstein to see, about 5 o'clock, someone who had come from Hamburg to make the acquaintance of the great man. Einstein hated this sort of thing, but he obviously got little support from his family. He therefore led me into a nearby park where we were able to continue the conversation undisturbed. As soon as the danger of a meeting had passed we returned to his study. In two hours I had explained all the essentials to him; and now Einstein began the process of turning the information to his own use. One can describe this process as the organic absorption of new information into an already existing uniform picture of nature. It was eight when we had our evening meal, but even during this the discussion and mental probing of the subject did not cease. The intake of intellectual nourishment went on while the intake of material nourishment was left to instructions from his wife: what he should put on his fork and when he should put it into his

[17] Clark: p.380: Plesch: P.201, 235.

mouth. For Einstein's attention was far from the macaroni we were eating." After the meal the discussion continued. Midnight came and went, so did the last train for Werder where Joffe was living. He tentatively remarked that the talk could be carried on at some other time, but the idea made no impression on Einstein. "Finally, at two in the morning," says Joffe, "the discussion ended; everything was settled, all doubts had been cleared up. Once again, a piece had been fitted into the contradictory jigsaw which was Einstein's picture of the world. Neither I nor many other scholars would have been capable of so long and so systematic an intellectual exercise. But for Einstein it was obviously commonplace."[18]

Elsa never really settled well into Princeton. She made the best she could of it, and continued to look after Einstein to the best of her ability. She was a loyal companion, and Einstein had affection for her. He wrote to Born at the time of her death: "I have settled down splendidly here: I hibernate like a bear in its cave, and really feel more at home than ever before in all my varied existence. This bearishness has been accentuated still further by the death of my mate who was more attached to human beings than I."[19]

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[18] Clark: p.505: De Wahrheit, Berlin, March 15-16, 1969.

[19] Born-Einstein Letters: No.73. Undated. p.128.

In June, 1921, Einstein gave a lecture at King's College, Strand, in German. [he had confidence in English broadmindedness]. All the tickets were sold in aid of a charity for distressed European students, it was sold out. The Organizers were worried because of very strong anti-german feelings after last war. Whitehead, James Jeans, LIndemann, William Rothenstein (the artist) were in the audience. Rothenstein drew Einstein. "The hall was filled by those who would probably understand nothing, being ignorant alike of German and of relativity, but would nonetheless be eager to listen." There was no applause when the two men had walked onto the platform. The meeting could swing either way. "The Nation" of June 18, 1921 published the following: "Einstein had no notes, no hesitations, and no repetitions, and the logical order in which he expounded his ideas was masterly beyond praise. One sat wondering how much of this exquisite performance was being wasted upon the audience; to how many was this carefully precise German an unintelligible noise?". As on other occasions, the objectivity of Einstein's demeanor, the otherworldliness of his dreamy eyes, and his shock of flowing hair, disarmed potential critics. He talked for an hour, without interruptions, somehow evoking an interest even among those who could understand little more than the occasional phrase. Then he paused, and still

speaking in German, announced: "My lecture is already a little long." There was an unexpected storm of encouraging applause. "I shall take that as an invitation," he said. But my further remarks will not be so easy to follow." Finally he sat down. Then someone started clapping. The applause grew and whole rows of men stood up, a spontaneous acclamation of courage as much as of relativity.

One interesting point in the lecture was Einstein's statement on the ancestry of relativity. "I am anxious to draw attention to the fact that this theory is not speculative in origin," he said. "It owes its invention entirely to the desire to make physical theory fit observed facts as well as possible. We have here no revolutionary act, but the natural combination of a line that can be traced through centuries. The abandonment of certain notions connected with space, time and motion, hitherto treated as fundamentals, must not be regarded as arbitrary, but only as conditioned by observed facts."[20]

In 1928, Einstein was ill. His heart was affected. He was put to bed by Dr. Janos Plesch, a close friend. It was at this stage that he employed Helen Dukas as his secretary, who stayed with him until he died. She said: "The professor lay reading in bed. When he looked up and saw me he stretched out his hand and said

[20] The Nation: June 18, 1921.

smilingly: "Here lies an old corpse." At that moment all my fear fell away from me, even although even then I was not sure whether I would be able to work for him."

Louis de Broglie: I was particularly won over by his (Einstein's) sweet disposition, by his general kindness, by his simplicity, and by his friendliness. Occasionally, gaiety would gain the upper hand and he would strike a more personal note and even disclose some detail of his day-to-day life. Then again, reverting to his characteristic mood of reflection and meditation, would launch into a profound and original discussion of a variety of scientific and other problems. I shall always remember the enchantment of all those meetings, from which I carried away an indelible impression of Einstein's great human qualities.

Gilbert Murray: One had the feeling that all of us were capable of understanding what each one said and meant, a feeling by no means always present to international committees (this one was in the League of Nations). One felt also in the mass of one's colleagues a sense of what I would venture to call by the rather bold name of purity of heart. Einstein was one clear case-immense intellectual power, perfect goodwill, and simplicity.... What struck me most about [him], apart from his mathematics and

his music, which were both beyond my range, was his gaiety and instinctive kindliness.... Bergson once said of him that he had made discoveries at a greater distance from ordinary organs of human knowledge than any other man in history... "[21]

Even after he became famous, his work, came first. "Zionism and Palestine were only peripheral concerns." Kurt Blumenthal to Weizmann. The same could be said of pacifism, politics, socializing, universities. He would not "travel around or visit congresses, since in order to preserve my rights as a thinker I have to stay quiet in order to work."[22]

Regarding Zionism, Bluemfeld tried to convince Einstein that a Jewish State was a Good thing. A few days later Hermann Struck (etcher) also tried to interest him in the Bible and Jewish religion, but Einstein refused to be drawn: "I really don't know enough about my religious feelings," he said... "I have always known exactly what I should do, and I feel satisfied with that." ... "I am against nationalism but in favour of Zionism.

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[21] Clark 439/440: Smith & Toynbee, P. 200.

[22] Clark: p.378. [Einstein-Weizmann, October 27, 1923, Weizmann Archives.]

The reason has become clear to me today. When a man has both arms and he is always saying I have a right arm, then he is a chauvinist. However, when the right arm is missing, then he must do something to make up for the missing limb. Therefore I am, as a human being, an opponent of nationalism. But as a Jew I am from today a supporter of the Jewish Zionist efforts."

Weizmann, the English Jew, and friend of Balfour, who was heavily involved at all levels in the formation of the Palestinian state, canvassed Einstein and handled him beautifully. Einstein became involved in the Hebrew University, though he never taught there permanently.

He went on a fundraising tour of America, in aid of the new Hebrew University. There he met Robert Millikan of the California Institute of Technology, who was to be influential in presenting Einstein with America as an alternative to a country other than Germany in Europe. Einstein became disillusioned with intellectual politics & economics - if most of the money for the Hebrew University came from the States, then the American contributors demanded a great deal of say in the form, features and finances of the Hebrew University, equal in fact to the Board of Governors. Einstein completed this tour, but he never did another. In 1923, the year of the travel, he said "I will do

all that is asked of me, as long as I am not expected to travel around or to visit congresses. I will gladly give my name and write letters, and talk to people HERE, but as for the rest, in order to preserve my rights as a thinker I have to stay quiet in order to work. ....Therefore I cannot even come to Holland for a meeting.....I know the difficulties that are put in the way of your doing an already difficult job. It cannot be easy to be the Chosen of the chosen people."
Einstein served on the board of governors for the Hebrew University, but removed himself from the list in June 1928.

Einstein was 50 when he collapsed in the spring of 1928, but still brilliant and perceptive. He had invitations for many prestigious posts from all over the world. He lived in the one country where his international brilliance didn't matter a jot, that is, Germany.

However, he claimed that his forced bed-rest taught him to think. From now on he worked on his Unified Field theory, and continued with this to the end of his life.

Anti-semitism rising steadily in Germany. Academies, Universities, Institutes were becoming stickier and more and more

controlled by state ideology. The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute was no exception. From 1928 to 1933, Einstein lectured and stayed at Leiden, Caltech, Oxford, he knew the Royal Family of Belgium, an acquaintance which later had large consequences on Einstein's pacifism and his views of nuclear weapons.

The War with Germany drew nearer and nearer: Einstein was asked whether there was any relation between science and metaphysics, he declared that science itself was metaphysics. He was asked what he thought of Hitler: "I do not enjoy Mr. Hitler's acquaintance. Hitler is living on the empty stomach of Germany. As soon as economic conditions in Germany improve he will cease to be important."

On the other hand, it was in Tom Quad that Einstein was discovered one day by Gilbert Murray with, as Arnold Toynbee describes it, a faraway look on his face. "The faraway thought behind that faraway look was evidently a happy one for, at that moment, the exile's countenance was serene and smiling," Toynbee has written. "'Dr. Einstein, do tell me what you are thinking,' Murray asked. 'I am thinking,' Einstein answered, 'that, after all, this is a very small star.' All the universe's eggs were not in this basket that was so infested by the Nazis; and for a

cosmogener, this thought was convincingly consoling."[23]
When he went back to Berlin in May, he found it sadly deteriorated. Lindemann tried to save as many German physicists as possible from Hitler, and also to tempt Einstein to Oxford.

Einstein treated with Caltech Pasadena and eventually went there, and when there he met Abraham Flexner, "the American educationalist then preparing to set up a new kind of educational institute, made possible when Mr. Louis Bamberger had two years previously provided $5 million for what Flexner called a "haven where scholars and scientists may regard the world and its phenomena as their laboratory without being carried off in the maelstrom of the immediate." Its small number of selected staff would have no duties in the usual sense of the word and the Institute for Advanced Study, as it was to become, thus offered something comparable to the conditions which had drawn Einstein to Berlin two decades previously; no routine and a lot of time to think.

Flexner had a good chat with Einstein and made a date to see him again. Einstein signed up with Princeton. Millikan, of Caltech in Pasadena was put out, but there was not much he could do about

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[23] Toynbee, Acquaintances, P.268

it. Einstein moved right out of Europe, not just out of Germany. He had offers from Pasadena, Princeton, Oxford and Jerusalem. He measured them by the yardstick of how easily they would allow him to get on with his work.

As far as pacifism was concerned the protests from America were sound enough. But they were wildly out regarding Einstein's attitude to communism and to Soviet Russia. Only a few months previously he had refused to sign an appeal from Henri Barbusse, a man with whose pacifist views he greatly sympathized, solely on account of its "glorification of Soviet Russia." He had, he told Barbusse, reached some somber conclusions about that country. "At the top there appears to be a personal struggle in which the foulest means are used by power-hungry individuals acting from purely selfish motives. At the bottom there seems to be complete suppression of the individual and of freedom of speech. One wonders what life is worth under such conditions...."[24] His view of the Revolution was a balanced one in which he weighed the individual against the available freedom with considerable judgement.

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[24] Clark: p.548: Einstein-Barbusse: Jene 1032, Nathan and Norden, p. 178.

Einstein had a strong sense of what was right and wrong. When ideologies became high-profile, like communism or pacifism, academic freedom, nuclear physics, he listened to their potentials to help ease the human dilemma and pain, which at first sighting, these things appear ideally suited to do. But when the same ideologies and philosophies gather momentum, and a life of their own, they often cease to be an aid to the human dilemma, and in unforseen ways often contribute far more on the negative side. When this happened, Einstein withdrew his original endorsement of the philosophy, because it no longer functioned in accordance with his fundamental views on life.

On March 10: Einstein made public his decision to remain out of Germany. He said he would probably settle in Switzerland. "As long as I have any choice in the matter, I shall live only in a country where civil liberty, tolerance, and equality of all citizens before the law prevail. Civil liberty implies freedom to express one's political convictions, in speech and in writing; tolerance implies respect for the convictions of others whatever they may be. These conditions do not exist in Germany at the present time."[25]

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[25] Clark: 557: New York World Telegram: Eve Seeley: March 10. 1933.

He returned to Europe, but stayed in Belgium. He never returned to Germany. He went to Princeton, became an American citizen, and eventually died there in 1950.

When he was taken ill, Einstein was at his home in Princeton with only Helen Dukas, his secretary. His step-daughter Margot was in the local hospital, ill herself. Einstein's aorta had split, and although surgery was not as advanced as it is now, it was the only chance to prolong his life. He "violently opposed" it, and later said to Helen Dukas, "The end comes some time- does it matter when?" "Let it burst", he had said years before in 1928 when warned of his condition. A few days later he was in intense pain, and the doctors wanted to move him into hospital, but at first....."he refused to budge. Most patients would have been quickly over-ruled, but even now it was not easy to over-rule Einstein. Finally he was persuaded that hospital was best; characteristically, the argument which counted was that the nursing was too much for Miss Dukas."[26]

Margot, his step-daughter, wrote to Hedwig Born: "Did you know that I was in the same hospital as Albert? I was allowed to see him twice more and talk to him for a few hours. I was taken to him in a wheel-chair. I did not recognize him at first - he was

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[26] Clark: p 762.

so changed by the pain and blood deficiency. But his personality was the same as ever. He was pleased that I was looking a little better, joked with me, and was completely in command of himself with regard to his condition; he spoke with a profound serenity - even with a touch of humour - about the doctors, and awaited his end as an imminent natural phenomenon. As fearless as he had been all his life, so he faced death humbly and quietly. He left this world without sentimentality or regrets."[27]

Six years earlier, Hedwig Born had reminded him in a letter that he had said, when she asked him if he was afraid of death: "I feel such a sense of solidarity with all living things that it does not matter to me where the individual begins and ends." His manner of death testified to this statement being the literal truth.

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[27] Einstein-Born Letters: P. 232/234.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

CONCLUSION

Einstein had one of the clearest minds in history. His vision, intuition, penetration, deductive and expressive abilities have probably only been known by a handful of men. Aristotle springs to mind as the closest to Einstein in clarity and type. Bach may have been able to follow him closely on an intelligence level, but it is doubtful he would have been capable of the astounding originality of Einstein's thought. And this limit on Bach could probably be laid at the door of religion - Bach's roots were Lutheran, Trinitarian, and the profound beliefs he held did not require that he penetrate or question God's creation. Jewish thinkers seem to have no fear of the finitude or mortality of man, or the magnitude of creation. Einstein's roots were Jewish.

Einstein's life and work testify to his being *"bigger"* than the religious experience of his times. His work owed very little to others, it was original in both conception and execution. He revolutionized science, especially theoretical physics, and he rattled philosophy, religion and warfare. Einstein's ideas could be expressed clearly in mathematical language, albeit using

new forms, which meant the audience who could read his work was necessarily small. In fact what he valued most was people who could understand and discuss his new ideas. [1.i.]

Einstein had an *incomparable* genius for speculative abstract thought, and the perceptions to see how it could be expressed logically. He was able to think about the infinitely big and the infinitely small, and see them as all parts of a coherent and ordered whole. The power and penetration of his abstract thought is unique. Nowadays the understanding and implications of Einstein's work have filtered down to the popular level, and it has had a profound effect on our modern day values. [1.i.i.]

Einstein's worked continuously at evolving a Unified Field Theory for the last 20-odd years of his life. In his own terms, he did not succeed in formulating it or *expressing* it. Einstein constantly *pushed his powers of expression*, as well as his powers of penetration, right up to the end of his life. He was driven by his conviction that there was such theory, and that man could understand it, it would not be statistical, it would be logical and could encompass all the known physics of the universe. [1.i.ii.]

Einstein's *self-expression* was more than *adequate*. Intuition

played a large part in Einstein's reality. He had what amounted to vision regarding the anomalies in theoretical physics, and would 'intuit' possible solutions, rolling them over and trying to fit them into the grand overall design. More than half Einstein's fun came from expressing these beautiful processes which could not be seen with the human eye in elegant and incontrovertible equations, predicting the existence of the unseen. His keenest joy came when he fitted another "piece of the puzzle" into the whole. His efforts to "draw God's lines after him" constituted his favourite mode of engagement. His mode of engagement with the world out there was necessarily modified. He refused to bother with anything that he considered superfluous, from socks to unwanted visitors. He is often described as stubborn or obstinate, which rose from his determination not to subscribe to what he considered unnecessary effort. [1.i.iii.]

Religion:

He stood back from *all-that-out-there (reality as a whole)* and felt it to an astonishing degree. It is this quality of imagination, of being able to feel what it would be like to sit on a light beam, what he would see, which gave rise to one of his most revolutionary ideas. Many scientists were astounded at the intuition and vision of Einstein's work. Which is another way of

saying original. What is also astounding is how often he was right. [1.ii.i.]

Einstein's cosmology turned into "cosmogony", a sort of new religious movement. The precise and wonderful working of the galaxies is a perfect reflection of the science myth - accurate, calculable, beautiful, devoid of wishful thinking and guesswork, uncontaminated by human error. It is an ideal state. And it can be expressed in mathematical terms, which, if they don't work out, are demonstrably untrue, and can therefore have no value. [1.ii.i.]

Einstein had deep *cosmic trust.* He felt at one with the cosmos, and so *belonged* to it, fruitfully. "I feel such a solidarity with all living things that it does not matter to me where the individual begins and ends." This "solidarity" implies his inter-connected-ness with all things, his identity was definite and meaningful. He saw the whole cosmos as a beautiful, orderly mechanism, of which this star is a very very small part, and as such the petty doings of men are relatively unimportant in the sum of things. He took comfort from that, especially when men were behaving particularly badly. It must also be remembered that he died after the McCarthy purges had started in the United States - even the "free-est" nation on Earth was subject to witch-hunts. This huge cosmos was

trustworthy in its magnitude. [1.ii.ii.]

Einstein did not believe in *providence*, if by that is meant that God was personal and could intervene in the affairs of men. He was, rather, profoundly in awe at the design and balance and order of the immense Cosmos. He found it infinitely more trustworthy than Man. Einstein's refusal to believe that uncertainty, probability, statistical chance lay at the heart of things is well-known. [1.ii.iii.]

Einstein's official *religious tradition* was Jewish, he espoused the concept of a homeland for the Jews, and went on a fund-raising trip for the new University of Jerusalem. He was on the Board of Governors, but withdrew when he became aware of the strings attached to American money, and the politics involved in running a University. He never felt the need for regular religious practice, most of his closer friends were Jews, with the notable exception of Max Planck. So at a fundamental level, his Jewishness held. But it was more of a cultural and racial distinction than a religious one. [1.ii.iv.]

The *institution standing* of Judaism has undergone enormous processes this century. Einstein's charisma and prestige was truly international. He did what he could for Palestine's

cause, but again within the parameters of his own value system. He identified with the new homeland for Jews, and went on a fund-raising tour for it. But the first was the last. He did not enjoy being feted and idolized. He felt like a performing seal. He had to endure endless speeches, dinners, functions, (and clothes) all of which he felt were a waste of time that took him from his real work. He finished the course that he said he would undertake, and then said no more. And so in spite of powerfully persuasive people like Weizmann, he stubbornly refused to repeat the performance. He would do what he could from his home or office - write letters, articles, give donations, endorse causes, give references, but he would not compromise his work. He "sinned" against the prevailing "oughts" in two other similar circumstances that I can think of. One, he did not like being told by Millikan of the California Institute of Technology that he should not give Pacifist talks to organizations (politically incorrect!) who invited him. He complied, and did not give the speech, finished the lecture tour, but never returned to Pasadena. And when he was on the prominent persons committee for the League of Nations, along with Henri Bergson, Albert North Whitehead, Madame Curie and others, he only travelled to Geneva for one meeting. He resigned, Madame Curie wrote him an extremely strong letter, and he withdrew his resignation. But he never attended another meeting, and seized the first

opportunity to resign again, this time for good. He was of course, publicly criticized for his behaviour on all three counts, but the criticism made no impression him whatsoever.

[1.ii.v.]

Shaping experience or context:

Einstein was naturally gifted with a clear mind. His uncle and the students who dined at his house gave him direction in the quantitive fields (including Kant) and it became a question of time before he discovered the joys of theoretical physics. He enjoyed pure maths, but felt that they lacked point, or a meaningful destination. Physics interested him deeply, and theoretical physics combined perceptions of a new reality which could be mathematically expressed and put to the test. The years he spent working at the Swiss Patent office presented him with technical and practical physical laws constantly. He enjoyed his work and was good at it - his apprenticeship in science, analysis and expression. He enjoyed working on his papers too, in his spare time, but had no expectation or idea that the outcome of his work would turn him into a Jewish Saint.

[2.i.i.]

Personality:

Einstein's *personality* was warm, outgoing, comforting. Like Bach, he was entirely his own man. He *excelled* because he was brilliant, he did his best according to his own lights. People

who knew him generally testify to his ability to see things clearly, and to make them feel supported and good about their work. [2.ii.i.]

Einstein's *ideological stance* on, say, conscientious objection, was tempered by his experience, not the other way round. He lived his own life according to his own value systems, which he compromised only when a deeper value system was violated. Einstein was generous with his genius - he was confident enough in himself to acknowledge the work of others. He went further with his ideas of international co-operation. In the early part of the century science was truly international, a sort of golden age of exchange and trust obtained in the scientific world - it had no political or national borders. In later life Einstein (and many of his fellow-scientists) mourned the loss of it. In fact, it saddened him that other disciplines could not achieve the same degree of international co-operation. And he always championed the under-dog. He believed absolutely in the sovereignty of the individual, and in the individual's ability to decide for himself. Hence his dislike of any form of coercion. It explains his initial endorsement of communism and pacifism, and it also explains his retractions, from communism when its leaders started coercing its adherents, and from pacifism, when he saw Hitler's troops marching into territory to which they had

no right. [2.ii.ii.]

On a *corporate level*, Einstein felt so strongly that Nazism was evil, that he endorsed the research needed to destroy Hitler militarily, i.e. the atom bomb. But his feeling was that if Hitler was not stopped, the sovereignty and responsibility of every individual would be destroyed. So while still abhorring war and killing and the accompanying senseless destruction, the cost of no war ever was too high. It would appear that he believed every man had a part in life to play, and that he should play it as honestly and well as he could. He himself did his best, he made mistakes (even Saints make mistakes! he said to Max Born once) but he was consistent with his own fundamental personal value system. [2.ii.iii.]

He expressed the divine cosmic design, helped his fellow beings understand it, but he considered man's part in the whole as pretty small and insignificant. The "whole" was *trustworthy*, unique, orderly, precise. He himself did not feel that his individuality was bounded - he felt very much a part of the whole, but not necessarily a big part. He was unconcerned about death. He enjoyed life such as it was. His main expression of reality is his towering contribution to modern science.

Einstein searched for practical truth. He wanted to discover God's lines and draw them after him. It is the hallmark of his work. And he wanted proof that he had got it right. Whoever could contribute to that proof delighted him. Karl Popper, when he listened to Einstein ("these are my predictions - they are open to refutation") was deeply influenced by his attitude to scientific method. In other words, the theory must stand up to rigorous tests. Einstein was thoroughly against war and killing, and yet when presented with the solid fact of invading and dominant soldiery, his own personal truth dictated that to allow the violation rather than fighting it was a violation of another truth - the sovereignty of the individual. All through his life, he tries to stand by the truth. As a child he considered carefully before he spoke, making sure he spoke accurately.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

PABLO PICASSO

PARTS I, II, III.

CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PABLO PICASSO

PART I

Picasso was born on October 25, 1881, in Malaga, Spain. His father was an art teacher who did some painting himself. He bred pigeons. His mother was Andalusian. His mother appears to have stayed in touch with him all her life, and to have known him through and through. He had two sisters, Lola and Concepcion, born 1884 and 1887 respectively, but Concepcion died of diphtheria in 1891. According to one biographer, this is when Picasso started to hate God and be frightened of death. Picasso started to paint at seven, helped by his father. They moved to Corunna in 1891, where his father had a new teaching post, and in 1894, his father handed him his brushes and palette, because, he said, Picasso was so talented he would never paint again. They moved to Barcelona in 1895, another post for his father, and Picasso passed with formidable ease, aged thirteen or fourteen, into the advanced class of the School of Fine Arts. There are several of his paintings dating from this time, and they are conventional and extremely well executed. The subject matter is

suitably sentimental - first communions, altar boys and deathbeds. "I wanted to become a painter - but I became Picasso," he said years later, and: "Unlike in music, there are no child prodigies in painting. What people regard as premature genius is the genius of childhood. It gradually disappears as they get older. It is possible for each child to become a real painter one day, perhaps even a great painter. But he would have to start first from the beginning. So far as I am concerned, I did not have this genius. My first drawings could never have been shown at an exhibition of children's drawings. I lacked the clumsiness of a child, his naivety. I made academic drawings at the age of seven, the minute precision of which frightened me."[1]

He was already, at this early stage, knowledgeable about brothels and sex.

He won an honourable mention in a national exhibition in Madrid, and his uncles put up a bit of money so that he could go there to study. Again, he passed the entrance examinations easily, and enrolled at the Royal Academy of San Fernando. But he abandoned that quickly, and struck out on his own. He studied the paintings in the Prado Museum, Spain's equivalent of the National

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[1] Taschen: Picasso: p. 8.

Gallery. He liked Goya, El Greco and Velasquez particularly. "The hours we spent admiring and studying the *Burial of Count Orgaz*!" (El Greco) said his friend Bernareggi.[2]

There is a quantum leap in his work at this time. He demonstrated his complete distrust of any theory, a distrust which he retained to the end of his life. He scorned the methods used by art teachers. He was also scornful of the fashion for history painting. However, in the spring of 1898, he contracted scarlet fever, and his sister Lola was probably sent to nurse him. He recovered, and then returned to Barcelona. To convalesce, he went to Horta de Ebro, a tiny village in the mountains, with his friend Pellares. Pellares eventually outlived Picasso, dying at the age of 97.

When he returned to Barcelona, he started frequenting "Els Quatre Gats", a cafe patronized by the modernists, intellectuals, painters, sculptors and poets. Two friends joined him while the Quatre Gats was his waterhole, Casagemas and Sabartes. Sabartes is described as "a born and willing victim - with a meek obstinacy, skepticism, and deep unshakable self-satisfaction."[3]

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[2] Richardson: A life of Picasso: p.95.

[3] O'Brian: Picasso: p.76.

Picasso shared a studio with Casagemas, and together they went to Paris in October, 1900. They headed for Montparnasse, but a friend who was on his way back to Barcelona offered them his studio, for free, on the hill of Montmartre, close to the Sacre Coeur, and so Montmartre became Picasso's stamping ground. Picasso absorbed Impressionism, Toulouse Lautrec for preference, and painted one of his first famous pictures, *Moulin de la Galette*, a dance hall. This place had been painted by the Impressionists Renoir, Toulouse Lautrec, and Van Gogh, the paintings of each full of light, fun, colour, and human enjoyment. Picasso's painting, says John Richardson, "Is conceived in terms of modernist shadows rather than impressionist light."[4] It is dark and lurid, with pretty cocottes and top-hatted pleasure seekers much in evidence. The human enjoyment has become salacious.

Picasso and Casagemas quickly found two companions, Germaine and Odette. Casagemas fell deeply in love with Germaine, but could not consummate the relationship. To "cure" him, Picasso took him back to Barcelona and on an intensified round of brothels. But Casagemas would not cheer up, and after 10 days Picasso fled, abandoning Casagemas. Casagemas returned to Paris and Germaine.

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[4] Richardson: A Life of Picasso: P.166.

Soon after, at a dinner party with Germaine, Odette, Pellares and two other friends, he tried to shoot Germaine, then shot himself through the head, dying a few hours later. The shock to Picasso slowly gathered momentum, and "catharsized" six months later, in a series of drawings and paintings which are famous. In May, 1901, he returned to Paris, to prepare for an exhibition at Vollard's gallery, famous in Paris for his *avant-garde* art.

The exhibition was a success. Picasso was noticed, and he got mostly favourable reviews. "A brilliant artist," wrote Felicien Fagus, the symbolist poet. "... he is clearly in such a feverish hurry that he has not yet had time to forge his own personal style...For him the danger lies in this very impetuosity, which could easily lead him into facile virtuosity and easy success. It is one thing to produce and quite another to produce something worthwhile, just as violence and energy are two different things."[5] Picasso was pleased with the reviews, loftily remarking from the experience of nineteen years: "..If the wise man doesn't approve, bad; if the simpleton applauds, worse. So, I am content."

He met, through the exhibition, Max Jacob, the poet, who remained

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[5] A.S.H.: p.57: Fagus: L'Invasion Espagnole.

faithful to Picasso for the rest of his, Jacob's, life.

Around this time Picasso devolved into what came to be called his "Blue Period". His paintings became progressively more depressing, both in colouring and in subject matter. He drew Casagemas on his death bed, including the bullet hole. He painted *Evocation: The Burial of Casagemas*, an extraordinary painting where Casagemas is in a white shroud surrounded by black mourners beside the tomb. Next level up, in a black shroud, he is led by two children to three prostitutes who are displaying their wares and watching the third level, which is again Casagemas on a prancing white horse, arms outstretched, being solidly embraced by another naked prostitute, with no feet. Picasso's paintings involved in hardship, hunger, cold, poverty, misery, illness, betrayal, death. And all of them in cold shades of blue, subjects and backgrounds. The women are exhausted and depressed, the men hunched and defeated, and the children victims of a ghastly poverty. Picasso at this time visited the Saint Lazare Infirmary, which started in the 17th century as a place of penance, to "cleanse the soul". It was turned into a prison after the Revolution, and in 1824 it became a woman's goal. Running it at this time was a Doctor Jullien, who was a venereologist "so Picasso may have been one of his patients - How else would he have known him? After all, he had frequented the

lowest whorehouses since the age of puberty; and, according to Francoise Gilot, he admitted in the late 1940s to having caught venereal disease early in life."[6] However it was, there are drawings and paintings of the inmates of Saint-Lazare, identifiable by the distinctive caps they wore, blue for prostitutes, white for syphilitics. The mothers and whore-sisters painted in 1903 are read by biographers and critics as cathartic paintings which finally rid Picasso of Casagemas' ghost.

One of the most famous, *La Vie*, depicts Casagemas and Germaine, nude, surprised or intruded upon by a tall woman holding a baby in her arms. Picasso's preliminary sketches show that the original idea underwent several transformations, from a tearful pregnant woman confessing to her lover (who looks remarkably like Picasso), her lover beating her, the two nudes in an artist's studio, and finally the artist turns into the woman holding the baby, and the male nude into Casagemas. John Richardson analyses this picture in terms of the Tarot. Picasso had recently spent several weeks with Max Jacob, who told fortunes, and enjoyed astrology, chiromancy and the Tarot. Picasso would deny furiously that he was superstitious and prone to "fetishism"

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[6] Richardson: A Life of Picasso: p.218.

when trying to stop Francoise Gilot publishing her book nearly 50 years later, but there is strong evidence that throughout his life he paid a great deal of attention to these things.

In 1904 Picasso moved into the Bateau Lavoir, on the Place Ravignan, the famous studio where he came into contact with the Parisian avant-garde. The area was being "rescued from the apaches." The Bateau Lavoir was a collection of wooden shacks, two floors lower at the back than at the front, a warren of impoverished artists and poets. The walls were thin and every sound went through them, in winter they dripped ice and smelt of fish and must. There was one and only one lavatory in the building. A fruit and vegetable seller lived in the basement, who in winter sold mussels. Towards the end of World War II, Picasso took Francoise Gilot to show her the Bateau Lavoir. She said: "The Bateau Lavoir represented the golden age, when everything was fresh and untarnished, before Picasso had conquered the world and then discovered that the world had conquered him."[7]

Picasso began to get more light into his work. He began to paint with more colour. And he introduced himself to Fernande Oliver,

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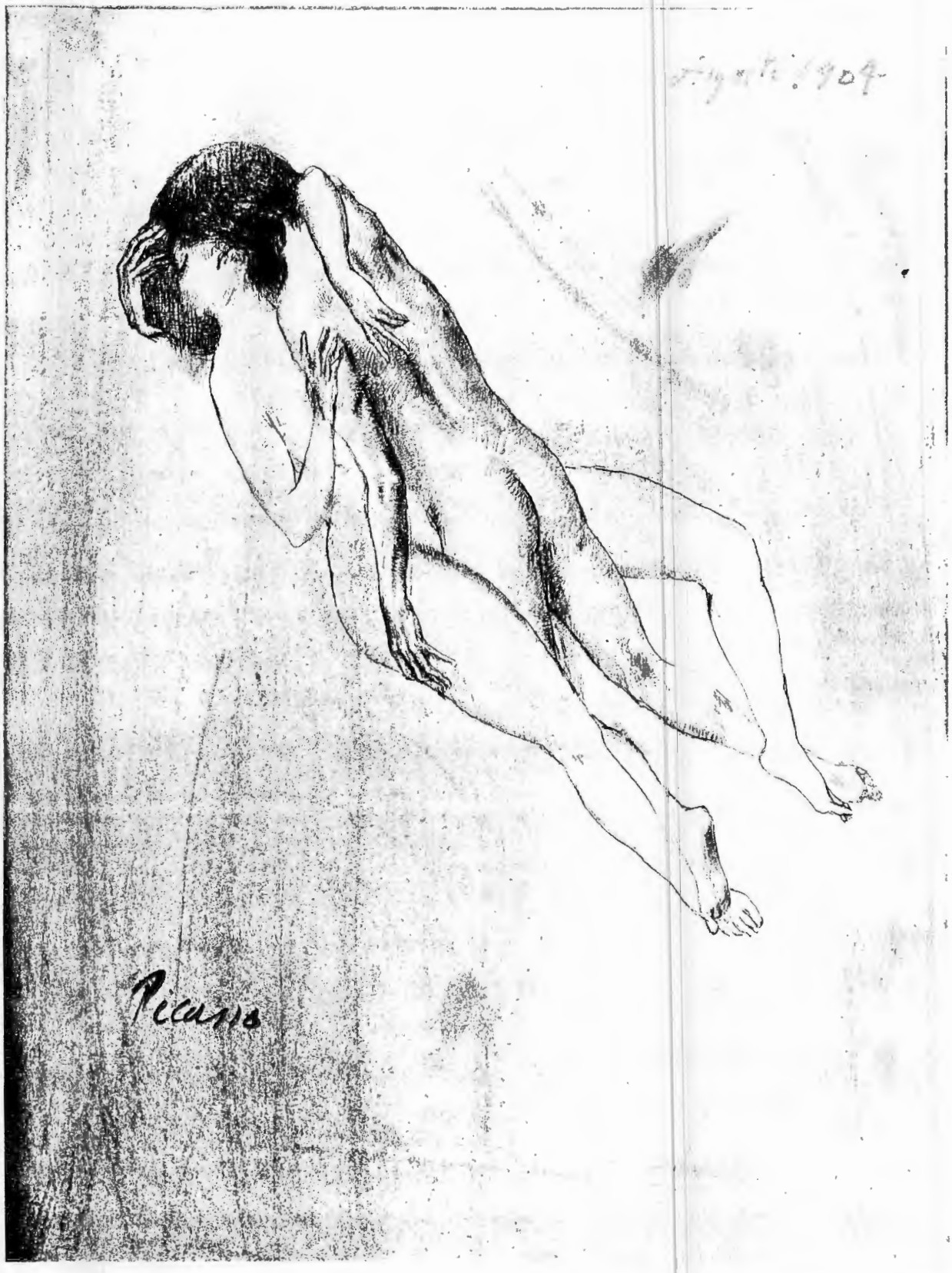
[7] Gilot: Life with Picasso: p.81.


Picasso

who became the first love of his life. She wrote her memoirs, called *Picasso & his Friends*, and described his studio as chaos, with easels, canvasses, paints, piles of newspapers, brushes, etching fluid, no curtains, and a pet mouse in the table drawer. She was the same age as he was, had already been married twice, big, beautiful and indolent. Gertrude Stein said of her: "For good or for bad everything was natural in Fernande, natural beauty, natural intelligence, natural creativity, naturally lazy."[8] Picasso did a wonderful drawing after they made love for the first time. When she published the memoirs in 1933, Picasso was outraged by the invasion of privacy, but later admitted it was a good portrait of the times. Twenty two years after her death in 1988, her godson published more of her *Souvenirs Intime*, in which it becomes apparent that Picasso started smoking opium in the summer of 1904. He smoked two or three times a week, until the suicide of one of the residents of the Bateau Lavoir, when he stopped abruptly in June 1908.

His friend the poet Jean Cocteau says that drugs cannot be left out of the account. "Besides facilitating the conquest of Fernande, opium flavours the themes and the mood of many late Blue and early Rose period works; and it may well have

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[8] Stein: Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas: P.27.

31 *The Acrobat's Family with a Monkey* 1905

engendered some of the hallucinatory frenzy of *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon.*" He goes on to say, however, that Picasso's real addictions were work, sex, and tobacco.[9] It was during this time that Picasso's *Saltimbanques* were painted, pictures of circus folk, acrobats, horses, boys, clowns, mercifully with far more colour, mostly pink. Compared with the overwhelming depression of the Blue Period, they represent enormous strides towards a healthier outlook. But John Richardson is not yet pleased with them: "The languid magic and beauty of Picasso's work between 1904 and 1906 may stem from symbolist poets and painters, but the callowness and lack of psychic tension that afflicts the more Wiegels-like of the *saltimbanques* can be attributed, at least in part, to the 'black blood of the poppy'."[10]

During this time, Montmartre was buzzing with art and poetry. "You've heard of La Fontaine and Moliere and Racine," Max Jacob, a French poet and guilt-ridden homosexual, announced to the *bande a Picasso,* "Well now that's us." That is, Apollinaire (another young poet), Picasso, Jacob were a trio, and known to them were Matisse, Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas, Derain, Salmon,

[9] Richardson: A Life of Picasso: p.324-325.

[10] Richardson: A Life of Picasso: p.325.

50 *Demoiselles d'Avignon* 1906–07 (see p. 79)

Modigliani, George Braque, Marie Laurencin, Henrie Rousseau and others too who were recognised. "There never was a group of artists more given to mockery and the unkind and intentionally wounding word," wrote Fernande.[11] Picasso was arriving. He was the acknowledged leader of his little *bande*, and was a force to be reckoned with by all his acquaintance, always noticed, always dominant. He did not necessarily speak much, but he was a very present force. He finished painting the famous portrait of Gertrude Stein in 1906, and the *Demoiselles d'Avignon* in 1907. "In the **Demoiselles d'Avignon** I painted a profile nose into a frontal view of a face. I just had to depict it sideways so that I could give it a name, so that I could call it 'nose'. And so they started talking about Negro art. Have you ever seen a single African sculpture - just on - where a face mask has a profile on it?"[12] Picasso said that the Renaissance painters invented the nose. Before that no artist depicted a nose. Picasso wanted to destroy absolutely everything. His rebellion against the myth of feminine beauty was relatively insignificant compared with his other rebellion: with this picture he wanted to destroy the image that people had been forming of him as a painter, and he was rebelling against the whole of Western art

[11] Oliver: Picasso & his Friends: p. 50.

[12] Taschen: Picasso: p.37.

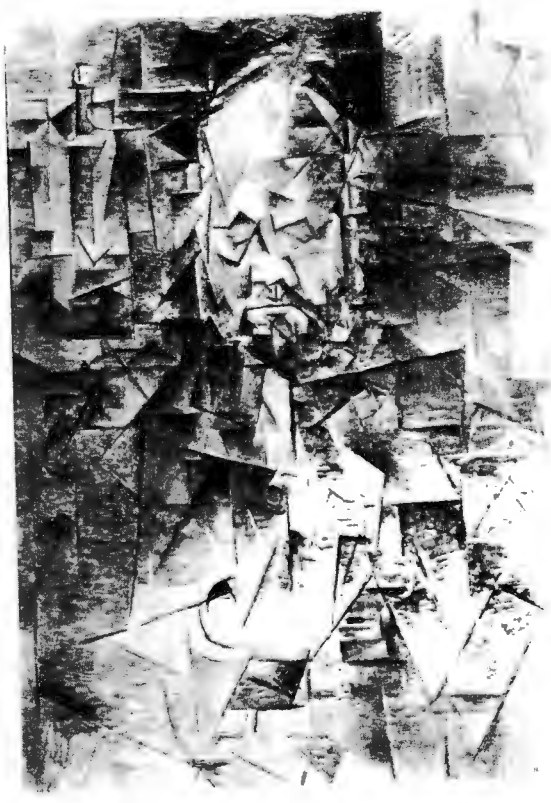
since the early Renaissance.[13] The Demoiselles d'Avignon were stylistically arranged in geometrical patterns which were finally radically deformed.

"I cannot bear people who talk about Beauty. What is Beauty? In painting you have to talk about problems! Paintings are nothing but research and experiment. I never paint a picture as a work of art. Everything is research. I keep researching, and in this constant enquiry there is a logical development. That is why I number and date all my paintings. Maybe one day someone will be thankful for it. Painting is a matter of intelligence. You can see that in Manet. In every single one of Manet's brushstrokes you can see his intelligence. And this work of intelligence can also be seen in the film on Matisse, where you can watch him draw, hesitate and then express his thoughts in the form of a bold stroke."[14]

The Steins were buying his work, a German collector, Uhde, came to Paris especially to buy from him, and so did Ivan Shuchukin from Russia. The Steins had the best collection of contemporary

[13] Taschen: Picasso: p.37.

[14] Taschen: Picasso: p.51.



paintings in the world, Cezannes, Renoirs, Matisses, Picassos predominating, but others as well. Picasso used to get worried and upset if Matisse had more paintings hanging than he did. He can say: "Of all these things - hunger, misery, being misunderstood by the public - fame is by far the worst. This is how god chastises the artist. It is sad. It is true. Success is something very important! It has often been said that the artist should work for himself, for the 'love of art', so to speak, and despise success. That is wrong! An artist needs success. And not only to live on, but also to be able to create. Even a rich painter needs success. Only a few people understand anything about art, and a feeling for painting has not been given to everyone. Most people judge art by its success. So why leave success to the "success painters"? Every generation has had theirs. But where is it written that success should always belong to those who flatter the public? I wanted to prove that you can be successful in spite of everything and everyone, without compromising oneself. Do you know what? My success as a young painter has been my protective wall. My Blue and Pink Periods were the screen, behind which I felt secure..."

In 1907 Picasso had started working with George Braque, on the revolutionary Cubist pictures. There is no doubt that they developed Cubism at the same time, together, and that their

paintings were remarkably similar. There is no suggestion of their copying each other either, they each on their own penetrated form, seeing the subject matter, landscape, portraits, still lives, as volumes, interior as well as exterior. Thus the form of a face, for example, would be transformed and/or expanded to show the cubular forms behind and inside the face as well as the exterior. It was a genuinely new way of looking at things artistically. Kahnweiler, the famous picture dealer, said: "he had taken the great step, he had pierced the closed form."[15] However, Cubism had not been sucked out of the top of Braque's and Picasso's thumbs. Looking around the whole world at that time, (1907 -1900) it was gearing up for the most extreme century ever, which has the distinction of being the most violent ever known, with millions upon millions of people being terminated globally. The new philosophies did not grow out of the old ones, they were rooted in poverty and deprivation - the worst physical conditions of man, graphically painted during Picasso's Blue Period. Old philosophies and systems were blamed for the poverty, which was considered universal, and the cure was pronounced to be revolution, or change at any cost. The intelligentsia - another word coined at the beginning of this century - was enjoying the collective emergence from old taboos

[15] Kahnweiler: The rise of Cubism: p.10. ASH. p.109.

and rules, moral, physical, religious or otherwise. Einstein formulated relativity, which removed the absolute quality of time and space, and had paved the way for Quantum Mechanics to seriously question a few more absolutes, Freud introduced the idea of aberrant behaviour being an illness, not a responsibility. Debussy, Stravinsky, Satie composed music which used new scales and harmonies - sometimes very discordant and ugly to a conventional western ear, and Picasso and Braque produced an art which tricked the eye and changed the form of the subject, went abstract in fact. Photography had taken the place of exact likenesses. Goodness, truth and beauty were part of the old philosophies, and so were *passee* and must gave way to the new. The whole ambience of the early 20th century was geared to the New, the Changed, the Revolutionary, and above all, the Secular. Poverty, want, deprivation, exploitation became the yardsticks of reality. Concepts of the "ultimately real" were no longer of use, no longer real, and many, including Picasso, looked out on a spiritual void with no life-lines.

Picasso, with his genius for art, rode the crest of the revolutionary wave. "I can say it with pride. I have never regarded painting as an art merely for the purpose of entertainment and amusement. As my pen and my paint do happen to be my weapons, I wanted to use them to penetrate deeper into a

knowledge of the world and of people, so that this knowledge might set all of us more and more free each day... Yes, I am aware that I have been fighting with my art like a true revolutionary.."[16]

Picasso and Braque worked extremely closely during this period. "Braque is the woman who has loved me the most," Picasso said later, and that Braque was "Mrs. Picasso." He was getting more confident by the day. But this very penetration or destruction of form awoke superstition in Picasso. He would not paint a cubist self-portrait, nor would he do one of Fernande, because he saw the process as demonic, which would lay him open to possession.

Picasso's portrait of his art dealer Ambroise Vollard deals with the subject in some kind of geometrical shorthand and therefore tells us very little about the actual person. This geometrical shorthand also removed any personality or identity from the Demoiselles. "The contours are obscured by geometrical forms which completely dominate the few remaining fragments of realism. The lines are ambiguous. They are part of an autonomous pattern, but can also be interpreted as a lapel or a handkerchief in the

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[16] Taschen: Picasso: p.10.

man's breast pocket or an arm. The space within the picture has lost its obtrusively convex areas and has become almost completely flat, no large chunks are placed side by side, and the transitions between the small areas have become smoother. The whole picture is covered by a pattern of prismatic particles."[17]

There was in Paris a painter called Henri Rousseau. He was an ex-customs officer, his art was "celebrating childlike innocence, spontaneity and imagination." [18] Apollinaire, Braque and Picasso decided to give him a grand banquet in the Bateau Lavoir to pay him homage. Thirty guests arrived, the studio was suitably decorated, speeches made, songs sung, it was a lovely evening, except that Picasso remembered he had ordered the food for the next night. Fernande and Alice Toklas rattled round and they managed to feed the guests, but there is no record whatever of the food arriving the next day, or any cancellations of a meal for 30 people. "It didn't take much to persuade Rousseau that this was his apotheosis," said Fernande.[19] As he was leaving, innocent as ever, Henri Rousseau thanked Picasso for the happiest day of his life, saying: "You and I are the greatest painters of

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[17] Taschen: Picasso: p.42.

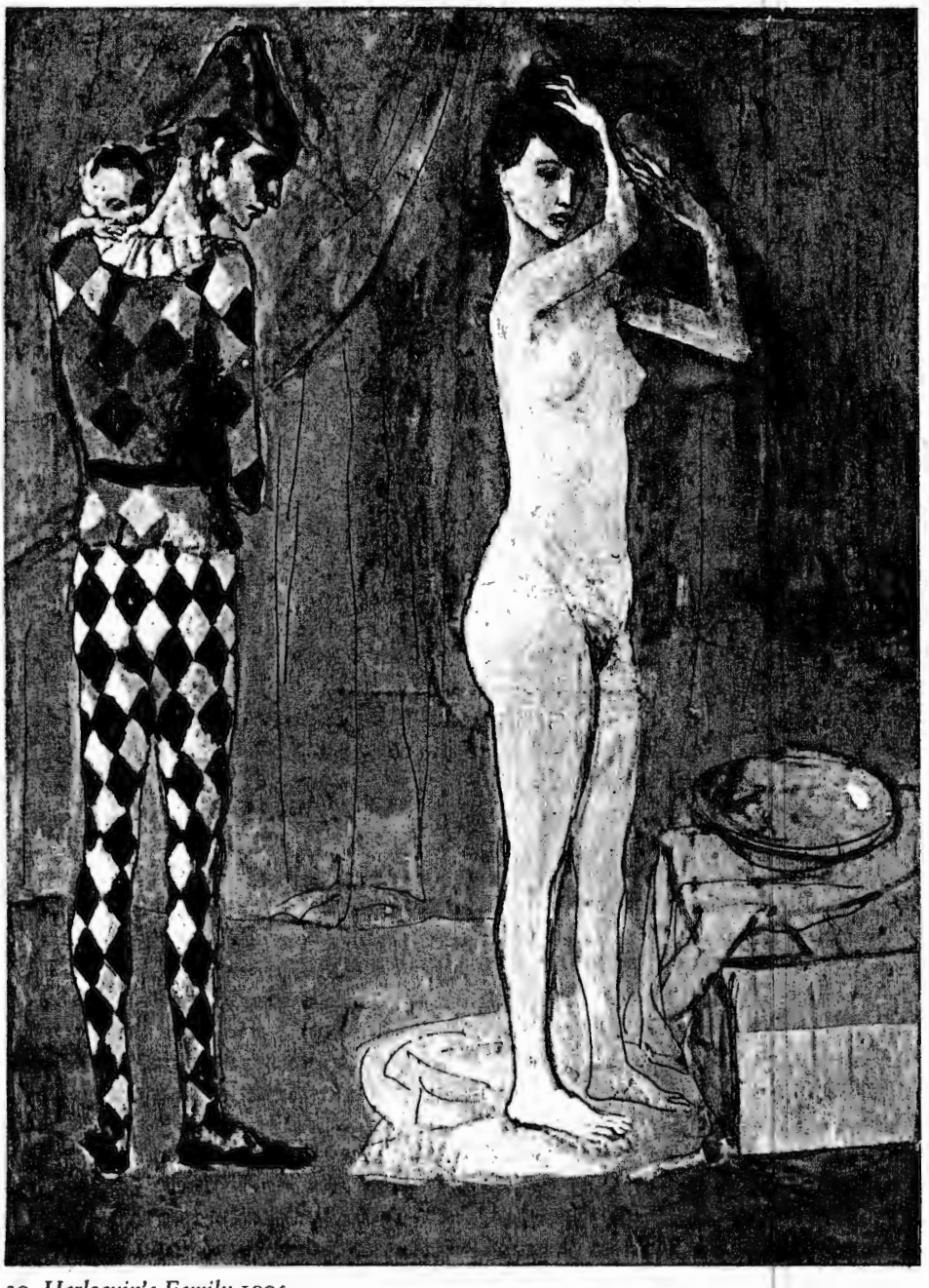
[18] ASH. Picasso: p.98.

[19] Olivier: Picasso & his Friends: p.69.

our time, you in the Egyptian style, I in the Modern!" There is no record of Picasso's reply or reaction. He must have been surprised.

In 1909, Picasso and Fernande left the Bateau Lavoir, and moved to the boulevard Clichy. Picasso had arrived - Shuchukin had bought fifty of his paintings, and his days of poverty were over. But the relationship with Fernande was drifting into limbo. She was having casual affairs, and Picasso was absorbed totally by Cubism. He too had casual affairs, and quite soon fell in love with Eva, who became his new mistress in tandem with Fernande. He could never break a relationship off or finish it. He would add and add to his collection of bodies. Fernande was too indolent and by now a bit bored with Picasso to make too much of a fuss, and she drifted happily away into a new relationship.

Apollinaire became one of Picasso's closest friends, his most ardent supporters. He was illegitimate, with a free-loading mother who was beautiful, but not too caring. She left him and his brother in Belgium when he was 19, in a pension posing as two Russian Counts. He walked a great deal in the Ardennes forests, communing with elves, writing poetry which he signed with a cabalistic swastika, and reading a mildewed book on demonology. When he met Picasso, he was already obsessed by the Marquis de



30 *Harlequin's Family* 1905

Sade, and had no difficulty in introducing Picasso to the cult of the 'Divine Marquis', both his philosophy and his pornography. He called the Marquis "the freest spirit that has ever existed," and taught Picasso his definition of art as "the perpetual immoral subversion of the existing order."[20] He introduced him to the pagan past and black humour, showed Picasso himself as Trismegistus, the demonic magician, and told Picasso of the "hurlequin" in the old Walloon legends, the soul escaped from Hell. Richardson says that the first eighteen months of their friendship could be called the "Apollinaire Period", because of Picasso's pre-occupation with harlequins, they seemed to access the same imagination. The Harlequin is one of the motifs which run through Picasso's art throughout his life. Tricky, discordant, amorous, cunning are some of the other descriptions of harlequin-esque qualities.

Apollinaire responded to Cubism. He backed Picasso to the hilt on his new art form. But his unconditional allegiance to Picasso was damaged. He had employed a temporary secretary, called Gery Pieret, who removed several statuettes from the Louvre. Two he had sold to Picasso (advising him to keep them in a dark cupboard), and another stayed in Apollinaire's flat until "The

[20] Apollinaire's introduction to *L'Oeuvre du Marquis de Sade*, 1909. Richardson: A Life of Picasso: p.334.

Louvre Burglaries" hit the front pages of the French press. Picasso and Apollinaire panicked, and tried to throw the statuettes in the Seine at dead of night, but that failed, the shadows were too threatening. The next morning, Apollinaire went to the Paris Journal, delivered the treasures and offered a major scoop, on condition that the sources were not revealed. His confidence was instantly breached, and the police arrived at Apollinaire's apartment and took him into custody. He went to gaol. Two days later, at seven in the morning, the police knocked on Picasso's door, and summoned him to a magistrate's hearing at nine o'clock. Fernande had to help Picasso dress, he was trembling so much, "he was almost out of his mind with fear."1 They took the bus - the detective was not allowed to take a taxi at his client's expense, and Apollinaire was brought into the courtroom. He looked dreadful, pale, tired, frightened, dishevelled. And Picasso denied him. Picasso was so scared he said he did not recognize his best friend. He was reduced by fear of officials and uniforms to the level of a bestial survival instinct. He was incapable of thinking of friendship, loyalty, or truth, let alone the man in front of him distressed and clearly in need of help. He said his acquaintance with Apollinaire was of the most superficial nature, that he hardly knew him at all. Apollinaire burst into tears, and Picasso, as if to out-do him, trembled and cried too. Apollinaire was taken

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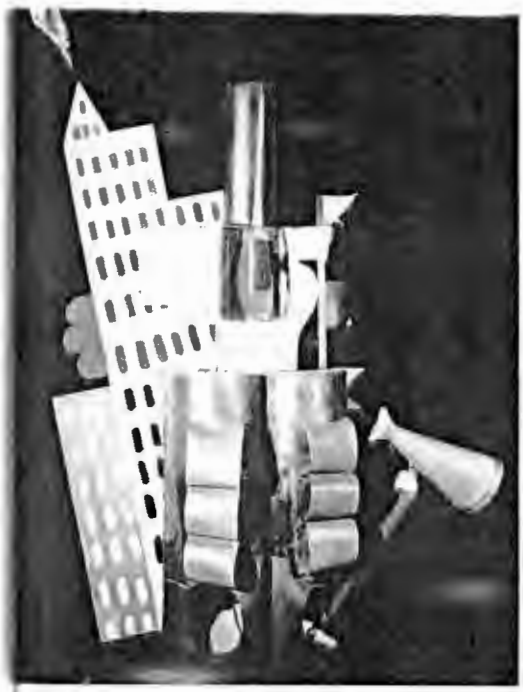
1 Oliver: Picasso & his Friends: p. 148.

back to prison, and released three days later. He took months to get over this destructive experience. Outwardly the friendship continued, but Apollinaire remained very bitter.

The First World War broke out, and Apollinaire provided a list of the avant garde who joined up, Braque, Derain, Matisse - although he was 45, Dufy, Fernand Leger, Albert Gleizes. Picasso was left almost alone in Paris, excepting Juan Gris (Spanish) and Gertrude Stein. Apollinaire was wounded in the head, and came back to Paris shaken and infirm, but he slowly recovered. He wrote a book called *The Poet Assassinated,* portraying Picasso's friendship as empty and meaningless, but Picasso chose to ignore it. Apollinaire died in November, 1918, of the Spanish flu which he could not resist after his severe headwound. Picasso was faced with death again. He feared mortality, and in someone close to him it was an agonizing shock. In December, 1915, his mistress of the moment, Eva, had died of tuberculosis. It had been neglected, until it was too late, because she hid the symptoms as long as she could. Picasso hated having sick people round him, and Eva was finally despatched to hospital when her coughing became too bad to ignore.



95 *American Manager (Parade)* 1917

96 *French Manager (Parade)* 1917

During the war, Picasso had made new friends. He designed and painted the costumes and scenes for the Ballet Russe's production of Parade, financed and directed by Sergei Diaghilev. Jean Cocteau wrote the words, Erik Satie wrote the music, Picasso painted the scenery., "Picasso was enchanted to be again part of a hardworking family of sacred monsters," comments Huffington.[22] The ballet itself was not a success. It was too avant garde and chaotic for the audience. It sounds like a farrago of noisy nonsense, typewriters clacking, shouting, mechanical devices, discordant music which was roared against by the cast. the Managers were dressed in structures which made them look 10 feet high. Satie sent a rude postcard to one of the critics, who sued him, and he wound up having a week in prison. As soon as it was finished it was hailed as THE modern art, everyone falling over themselves to "appreciate" it. It even had its martyr, in Erik Satie.

By now, Picasso was 36 years old. He was famous, outside France as well as in, he was rich, he was dominant.

One of the dancers in the Ballet Russe was Olga Kokhova, daughter of a colonel in the Ukraine. Diaghilev always included a few

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[22] ASH: Picasso: p.145.

dancers from a higher social class in his chorus lines. It improved business. Picasso moved in on her and married her. As Fernande had been natural, Olga was average. But she had greater than average social ambitions, and very soon she and Picasso became the toast of Paris. She also tidied him up ruthlessly. All trace of disorder and Picasso was eliminated from the apartment in the Rue de Boetie. His artwork was confined to one room, and so he rented the apartment above them, installed himself and his easel in the sitting-room upstairs, and turned the rest of the flat into a warehouse.

He went to London to set up another stage, stayed at the Savoy, and ordered countless jackets from Savile Row. He wore gold chains and bullfighter cummerbunds. He and Derain, in London for another production, were invited to a party given by Clive Bell and Maynard Keynes. Picasso was a sartorial triumph, but Derain wore his old serge suit. He, like Braque, believed that any concessions, however trivial, were signs of surrender to the "bourgeois despotism" they had sought to overthrow. They were civil to each other, but Braque and Derain were horrified at Olga's ordinariness and Picasso's apparent enjoyment of opulent values. The Picassos returned to France, Olga became pregnant and had a son, Paulo. Picasso was finding her most irksome, and he became increasingly sarcastic and hurtful. His paintings at

128 *Olga Picasso* 1917

127 *Paulo Picasso* 1924

the time show his growing disenchantment with Olga and the tidy social scene. But he also showed categorically that he could draw and paint conventionally when he wanted. Olga told him that she wished to recognize the portrait of herself, and so she could. She is seated on a chair, the epitome of the young fashionable wife, with a fan and voluptuous vegetation on the chair upholstery. Picasso did not like flowers. He would never allow water to be put into vases, because, he said, they were going to die anyway, and he did not like to be reminded of death. However, the painting is entirely suitable for a neat and tidy fashionable apartment. He painted his son Paulo in the same style, dressed in a harlequin suit. Paulo was an unfortunate child, dominated, used, ignored. They holidayed in the summer at Dinard, in the North of France, he bought the Chateau of Boisgeloup, Gisors, in 1932, which Olga always disliked. This was in the middle of the Depression, so he would certainly have acquired it very cheaply. Picasso was already wealthy, and the Depression made no impact on him financially at all. There were still enough buyers for those pictures he wanted to sell. Boisgeloup had stables and barns, and Picasso soon filled them with all kinds of bits and pieces he found. He was beginning to make sculptures out of scraps of this and that, turn nothing into something, with his usual originality and desire to surprise.

Picasso was never troubled by money matters again. From Chateaux to extra tubes of paint, coal in winter during a world war, and "being able to live like poor man, but be rich", he could. His work had been selling better and better since 1904 after his Vollard exhibition, he had become increasingly fashionable. The Cubist period had been highly publicized, in that it caused a world-wide furor, not confined to art. This high-profile and emotional coverage had given Picasso the fame of a film star, and there is always a market for the famous. "I'm no pessimist," declared Picasso. "I don't loathe art because I couldn't live without devoting all my time to it. I love it as the only end of my life. Everything I do connected with it gives me intense pleasure, but still, I don't see why the whole world should be taken up with art, demand its credentials, and on that subject give free rein to its own stupidity. Museums are just a lot of lies, and the people who make art their business are mostly impostors."[23]

He mastered the publicity game before the world knew that such a game existed - he gave careful interviews and photograph session to wide-circulation magazines before his exhibitions were shown.

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[23] Taschen: Picasso: p. 16.

There was much more to Picasso than being in the right place at the right time. He undoubtedly had a personal magnetism which he was able to infuse into his pictures, and that too is part of the reason that when, in 1921, many works by impressionists and cubists were sold at once, his works sold for two and three times as much as the others. He made people accept what he dished out, in art as well as personally, and it is difficult to understand his success except in terms of deliberate will. It's as though he wished to force the human race to experience pain in all its forms. Alternatively, he may have wished to show everyone the magnitude of malign life. Many people responded, most of them the rich bourgeoisie which he despised so much. Their purchases were labelled as "guilt". There is no doubt that his art was contemporary and reflecting the taste of the times. He was a skilled entrepreneur, only selling selected canvasses at selected times, brilliant at keeping the price of his commodity in the essential luxury bracket, by fostering carefully the legends which surrounded the artist. Money was not so much an exchange rate as a barometer of success. He gave his mistresses and friends his work, but he would not sign it so that it could not be sold as an authenticated work, or without his knowledge (they had to bring the work back of course, to ask him to sign it.) He had no compunction about taking presents back either, if it

A mi buen amigo

suited him. He did this to Marie-Therese, 30 years after she had become his concubine. He stopped her monthly cheques, and eventually she went to a lawyer. Maya, her daughter, suggested that Marie-Therese sell some of the paintings, drawings and lithographs Picasso had given of her, but they were unsigned, and an agent took them to Mougins to try and get them signed for her. Maya had warned the agent on no account to leave the paintings behind. Picasso hummed and haa-ed, and told the agent to leave them till tomorrow and he would sign them tomorrow. The agent took them away again, unsigned, and eventually Marie-Therese's cheques were resumed, increased in fact, and Picasso gave her a letter authenticating the works, so that they were accepted as genuine Picassos. But these actions took place under legal pressure. His lawyers pointed out that by keeping Marie-Therese for 30 years, he had irrefutably acknowledged the obligation, and his own lawyer persuaded him that Marie-Therese was not putting the evil eye on him, or practicing black magic, she was in need and deserved authentication of her Picassos. On an earlier occasion, his family in Spain asked him to help them financially. They sent him a photograph of themselves, but he noticed that there was a copy of his famous etching *The Frugal Repast* on the wall behind them. "If they need money, why don't they sell that? - its worth a fortune," he said. He knew, at all times, what all his work could fetch, and one of his favourite games was playing

the cat to the purchaser's mouse.

In May, 1927, Juan Gris died, forty years old. He was a fellow Spaniard, who Picasso had consistently victimized. He had arrived in Paris in 1912, called Picasso "cher maitre" (which offended him - he was only 6 years older than Gris), and quickly became very much his own painter and his own man. Matisse, Gertrude Stein, and Kahnweiler the art dealer loved the man and his work, which Picasso translated into betrayal, treason, favouritism and war. As a Spaniard, Gris should not love a Frenchman, Matisse. Gertrude Stein wrote of him "the only real Cubism is that of Picasso and that of Juan Gris. Picasso created it and Juan Gris permeated it with his clarity and his exultation."[24] and "Juan Gris was the only person whom Picasso wished away."[25] He had a good intuitive access to reality which Picasso did not have, who instead whined to Kahnweiler "You know very well that Gris never painted any important pictures."[26] Kahnweiler instead described Gris as a "firm hand serving a pure soul and a clear mind."[27] It was this purity of soul and

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[24] Stein: Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas: p.91.

[25] Ibid., p.211.

[26] O'Brian: Picasso: p.201.

[27] Kahnweiler: Juan Gris, in San Francisco Museum of Art, Picasso - Gris - Miro, p.73. ASH: p.127.

clarity of mind which Picasso recognised and which made him so jealous. Eva had it too, and as he could not aspire to it himself, he tried to possess it by possessing Eva, and destroying Gris, who he could not possess. Of course it eluded him still. It is extraordinary that Picasso never found his way to his own spirit, for all his gifts. Kahnweiler further wrote: "(Gris) was gentle, affectionate, unassuming, but he knew his work was important and he was firm in defending his ideas... That is what makes Juan Gris such an outstanding figure in art: The complete identity of his life and art. His art is pure and so was his life. He was not only a great painter, but a great man."[28] He could never, and would never be able to say the same about Picasso. As Gris' integrity and goodness became more apparent, so Picasso became more vicious towards him. During the 1914-1918 war, Gris was close to starving in Paris. Matisse went to see Gertrude Stein to finalize some arrangements he had made with her to help Gris. As he arrived he met Picasso coming out. He was too late. Picasso had used his considerable powers of persuasion to make her drop Gris, and Matisse could get nothing from her. In 1921 Diaghilev commissioned Gris to design the sets for the ballet *Cuadro Flamenco*, but when he arrived in Monte Carlo where the company was based, he discovered that his sets were no longer

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[28] Ibid., p.72.

required. He did not know what had transpired. Picasso did. He had started the rumour that Gris was too sick to do the job, and presented Diaghilev with his own designs. Gris was not well, and was unfortunately late with his designs, but he was no more equipped to cope with Picasso's intrigues than a baby. Diaghilev accepted Picasso's designs (which he had previously rejected) and Picasso had a double victory, making Diaghilev accept what he had refused, and depriving Gris of a good and glamorous opportunity.

However, when Gris died, Picasso rushed to his side, he who disliked death so much. "I had painted a black picture. I did not know what it meant, but when I saw Gris on his deathbed, there was my picture," he said. Alice Toklas described how he "came to the house and spent all day ... Gertrude said to him bitterly, you have no right to mourn, and he said, you have no right to say that to me. You never realized his meaning because you did not have it, she said angrily. You know very well I did, he replied."[29] He gives himself away here, because if he had had "it", he would still have had "it". But he insisted on going to the funeral and was a pall-bearer with Gris's son. He and his intimates manage to introduce an element of black farce when they are present on serious occasions. Picasso was very short, five

[29] Stein: Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas:. p.212.

foot three inches, and the other pall-bearers were much taller. The coffin must have staggered to the grave with an abrupt tilt. And at Eva's funeral Max Jacob had drunk too much, made jokes in highly questionable taste, and finally propositioned the good-looking young hearse driver.

PABLO PICASSO

PART II

In January, 1927, Picasso introduced himself to a beautiful seventeen-year-old girl called Marie-Therese Walters, as she was coming out of a Metro station. He seized her by the arm, told her he was Picasso, and that they were going to do great things together. Marie-Therese was the greatest sexual passion of Picasso's life, with no boundaries or taboos. On her eighteenth birthday he took her to bed, and later installed her in a children's summer camp near Dinard, a few days before he and Olga and Paulo arrived. The fact that she was a minor and in a children's camp, legally off-limits, added a frisson of spice and daring to Picasso's passion. She was an endlessly submissive and willing sexual pupil, totally obedient to Picasso's will. "Some of the most vivid, lasting memories of Marie-Therese were precisely Picasso's sado-masochistic sexual preferences. She recalled that at the beginning of their liaison, he 'asked' her to comply with his fantasies, and that she herself was so naive at the time that his demands made her laugh. 'Pablo did not want me to laugh,' Marie-Therese remembered. 'He was always telling

Minotaur and Nude, 1933
India ink on blue paper, $10\frac{5}{8} \times 24\frac{3}{8}$ in
Art Institute of Chicago

me: be serious!'"[1] He was nearly thirty years older than she was.

His paintings after he met her show more leniency towards colour and life, and there are some still-lifes which are beautiful. Marie-Therese and Picasso are detectable in the shapes of fruit, tables and tablecloths, but they have joy in them. This sort of painting was all too rare in Picasso's work. He was predominantly suspicious of everyone and everything, sure that life was hostile and evil, he was self-compelled to get the better of it.

He installed Marie-Therese in a flat directly across the street where he and Olga had their apartments. He did not want to waste time travelling. He derived, too, a perverse pleasure from duping his maniacally jealous wife. Another proof that he could break everyone else's rules, and make his own. Marie-Therese called him her "wonderfully terrible lover."

At this time, 1930, Picasso accepted an offer from Albert Skira to illustrate Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. He completed most of the thirty etchings in a little over five weeks. He drew them in the

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[1] Gasman: Mystery, Magic & Love in Picasso: p.64. ASH: p.193.

158 *Vollard Suite* No. 85 1933

classical style, clear, uncluttered lines, technically brilliant. He only illustrated one of the actual metamorphoses, that of the changing into bats of the Daughters of Minias, because they did not join the Bacchic orgies. The deformations and rage that were in the last four years of his work disappeared, exorcised by his untrammelled sex outlet. "It was a humanistic and relentless classical rendering of Ovid, in the pure linear style of Greek vase painting. It marked Picasso's temporary metamorphosis from an artist overwhelmed by the dark creations of his sub-conscious to an artist of classic control and proportion."[2] Picasso remarked: "Braque said to me once: 'deep down, you've always loved classical beauty' That is true. It was then, and it still is. People don't invent a new kind of beauty every day."[3]

In 1933, he had an etching press installed at Boisgeloup, and he did a further series of etchings which were called *The Vollard Suite.* They go a long way to establishing what had become Picasso's mythology. It is an Arcady in which he is the Prime mover, whether as the artist, the minotaur, the professor, the sculptor. Terrible things can happen in this Arcady, pagan and personal to Picasso. One critic discerns Christianity in these etchings, but it is difficult to see where. He became less

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[2] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: p.198.

[3] Taschen: Picasso: p.86.

Minotauromachy, 1935
Etching and scraper, 19 ½ x 27 ½ in.
Museum of Modern Art, New York

responsive to contemporary fashions and values, and "he became more imaginative at making up a kind of cultural heritage for himself."[4] The main theme of these etchings is sexual, directly illustrated and anecdotal, and the tone is often extremely aggressive. At first, the etchings are almost idyllic, the sculptor relaxing in bed with his beautiful young model, absorbed and satiated. The Minotaur arrives, and starts an orgy in which the sculptor joins with abandon, he rapes the sleeping nude model, is killed in a bullfight, is resurrected to invade the studio again for more drinking and more sex. In 1935, Picasso etched *Minotauromachy*, which contains numerous elements of his own mythology. The Minotaur is walking, hand stretched out and a sword still stuck in his shoulder, towards a ladder with an apprehensive sculptor-type man climbing up it. Protecting him is a small girl, wearing a hat and conventionally clothed, completely unafraid and confronting the Minotaur holding up a candle in one hand and a bunch of flowers in the other. Between the girl and the Minotaur is the horse and female matador that he has mortally wounded, both dying of terrible injuries. In a window of a building above, two women feed pigeons and watch unmoved.

Meanwhile, Picasso's poor boring wife Olga was getting more and

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[4] Hilton: Picasso: p.207.

more neurotic. She realized the marriage was finished, she drank copious amounts of coffee, which irritated him intensely as he only drank herbal teas, and they shrieked at each other. At one stage, Picasso knocked her down and dragged her by the hair across the room. Fernande published her memoirs (1933), which angered Picasso. Olga tried to thwart him, and Marie-Therese obeyed him implicitly, and both behaviours infuriated him. His painting and drawing became savage and brutal. He later said this was the worst time of his life. Biographers attribute this rage to the advent of the Second World War - "Its source was deeper, much more ancient and elemental.... He was foreshadowing...the horror that was to be loosed on the world."[5]

Marie-Therese produced, at 25 years old, a daughter, and after nine years of obedient sex he was getting tired of that too, though he seemed delighted with his child. But Picasso hated ending anything - it was too like death, and so the situations dragged on far longer than they ought to have. He and Olga separated, but Picasso did not want a divorce, not only because of his corner of left-over Catholicism, but under French law, Olga would get half of everything, including his paintings. So they plumped for a legal separation, in which, incidentally, Olga was awarded Boisgeloup, which she hated and was actually Marie-

[5] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: p.205.

Therese's preserve. Olga never stopped badgering Picasso - she wrote him letters and followed him about wherever he and his entourage went for the rest of her life. And for this she is harshly judged by most biographers. On the other hand, Picasso always opened her letters first, reading them aloud and complaining happily about them. If she did not write or follow he wanted to know why, and where was she? He kept her circling, on his own terms. She is a pathetic creature, addicted and obsessed by Picasso to the point where she lost her identity. Equally, he kept the obsession alive.

Picasso was alone after the separation, except for Marie-Therese, and so he summoned Sabartes from Barcelona to come and work for him. Sabartes had a wife and a child who was retarded, which he willingly abandoned to work for Picasso in Paris.

Picasso was not alone for long. Now 53, he met Dora Maar, daughter of a French mother and a Yugoslav architect. She was a beautiful and intelligent photographer and painter. When he first saw her, she was sitting at a wooden table, and having taken off her black gloves embroidered with little pink roses, was driving a knife between her fingers into the wood. When she stabbed too close and cut her fingers, she ignored it, and gradually her hands became covered in blood. "She spoke

1937

136 Portrait of Dora Maar

beautiful Spanish and exuded the restlessness, bewilderment and anxiety of the modern intellectual."[6] She was totally different from Olga and Marie-Therese, well able to discuss Picasso's work with him at his own level. He admired her courage, her independent spirit, and her intellect. All the same, he compulsively set about destroying them. The first portraits of Dora Maar are among the best work Picasso did, until he started destroying her onto canvas as the weeping woman.

Another growing influence in Picasso's life at this time (1936) was Paul Eluard, the communist poet. Eluard was far more cerebral and emotionally mature than Picasso. Eluard worshipped his robust barbarianism - he was a collector of African and Polynesian art. His first wife, Gala, had left him abruptly to become Salvador Dali's muse and mistress, and he then married Nusch, a slender girl who had been a hypnotist's stooge and a minor actress, who he had met on the streets close to starvation. Nusch, with Eluard's knowledge, became Picasso's mistress for a time, and Dora, Picasso, Nusch and Eluard often made up a foursome. Marie-Therese was still kept available - Picasso wrote her love letters - and this was just such a situation as Picasso relished. He painted pictures of the two cuckolds, Dora dejectedly trying to sell flowers in the market place, and Eluard

[6] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: p.211.

as a transvestite suckling a catlike creature. A few years later he told Francoise Gilot about his relationship with Nusch: "But it was a gesture of friendship on my part, too. I only did it to make him happy. I didn't want him to think I didn't like his wife."

In Spain, insurgent generals were busy creating, as General Mola put it, "this impression of mastery" over the country. In order to achieve this, he said, "it is necessary to spread an atmosphere of terror." And the atrocities became worse and worse. Picasso had no political leanings, except he knew that he hated Franco, and he drew a sort of comic strip to ridicule him, presenting him as a loathsome slug. Be that as it may, the Spanish Government commissioned him to paint a picture for the Spanish Pavilion at the Paris World Fair. He procrastinated as usual - he hated being bound by commissions or orders - and then the historic Basque town of Guernica was bombed by German planes, at the instigation of the Republicans, killing and maiming nearly 2000 of the 7000 inhabitants, and completely destroying the town. Within a month, Picasso's most famous masterpiece *Guernica* was painted. It was huge, 11 1/2 feet by 25 1/2 feet. There were rumours that Picasso supported Franco and his government. Paul Eluard urged him to clearly state his position, and wrote a statement for him: "The Spanish struggle is the fight of

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reaction against the people, against freedom. My whole life as an artist has been nothing more than a continuous struggle against reaction and the death of art. How could anybody think for a moment that I could be in agreement with reaction and death? ...In the panel on which I am working, which I shall call *"Guernica"*, and in all my recent works of art, I clearly express my abhorrence of the military caste which has sunk Spain in an ocean of pain and death." Picasso listened to Eluard, who was the most important influence on him joining the Communist Party publicly a few years later.

Guernica was painted in a new studio, found for Picasso by Dora Maar. It was in the Rue des Grands-Augustins, a wonderful 17th century building with two huge studios and a warren of smaller rooms and spiral staircases. It had been the setting for Balzac's *Chef-d'Oeuvre Inconnu* and his hero's desperate quest to capture the absolute in painting. As mentioned, Picasso painted *Guernica* in a month, but for the first time he allowed people to watch him paint, and Dora Maar photographed the process of creating the huge picture. It made an immediate and very powerful impact when seen at the Pavilion. Claude Roy described it as "a message from another planet. Its violence dumbfounded me, it petrified me with an anxiety I had never experienced before." Michel Leiris said, "...Picasso sends us the

announcement of our mourning: all that we love is going to die." Herbert Read: "All that we love, Picasso is saying, has died. Art long ago ceased to be monumental. To be monumental, as the art of Michelangelo or Rubens was monumental, the age must have a sense of glory. The artist must have some faith in his fellow men, and some confidence in the civilization to which he belongs. Such an attitude is not possible in the modern world.... The only logical monument would be some sort of negative monument. A monument to disillusion, to despair, to destruction. It was inevitable that the greatest artist of our time should be driven to this conclusion. Picasso's great fresco is a monument to destruction, a cry of outrage and horror amplified by the spirit of genius."[7]

It was during the painting of *Guernica* that Marie-Therese dropped into the studio to see Picasso. She was still getting love-letters from him in spite of his installation of Dora Maar as official mistress. She told Dora to leave, she had more right there than Dora did because she had borne Picasso a child. Dora refused, and Picasso went on painting. Marie-Therese asked him to decide which one of them should leave. Picasso, recalling the incident with relish said "It was a hard decision to make. I

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[7] Read: "Picasso's Guernica", London Bulletin, No.6. October 1938, p.6.

liked them both, for different reasons: Marie-Therese because she was sweet and gentle and did whatever I wanted her to, and Dora because she was intelligent. I decided I had no interest in making a decision, I was satisfied with things as they were. I told them they'd have to fight it out themselves. So they began to wrestle. It's one of my choicest memories." There are other incidences where he baited one woman with the other. He told Dora Maar in front of Marie-Therese that Marie Therese was the only one he loved. "The transformation of the intellectual priestess of Surrealism into Picasso's doormat had been accomplished."[8] Dora Maar left the studio, ordered out by Marie Therese, and then Picasso deliberately destroyed her too - "You know very well the limits of my love", he told her, and sent her home with five kilos of coal. He used to say that there were two kinds of women - goddesses and doormats. Marie-Therese remained his willing doormat for the whole of her life. And he reduced Dora Maar to a doormat by the cruellest and most brutal behaviour. He often used to beat her, sometimes leaving her unconscious. He abused Marie Therese sexually, Dora Maar physically, and both of them mentally, all in the name of Hitler, who was making life so difficult for him.

On another occasion, Picasso brought home a female monkey, and as

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[8] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: p.262.

was his habit with all new pets, lavished great attention on it. He enjoyed Dora's obvious jealousy of this monkey and redoubled his attentions. Eventually the monkey had had enough, and bit Picasso solidly on the finger. Eluard didn't help the situation by recalling - out of his vast store of knowledge - a Greek king who had died of a monkey bite. The love affair was instantly terminated, the monkey sent back to the shop, and Picasso worried for days that he would follow the Greek king.

The paintings of Dora Maar reflect this destruction. There is one lovely one, abstract but not too distorted, brightly coloured, where she is calm, intelligent, beautiful, with important hands. After that, she became the ugliest of them all, fractured, distorted, cruelly slashed. He even painted one of her with a dog's head - his canine favourite of the time - and one of the most famous is the *Weeping Woman*. He told Andre Malraux: "Dora for me was always the weeping woman. Always..... It's important because women are suffering machines. And I hit upon the theme."[9] Poor Dora had even worse to come. In October, 1942, Picasso painted her not weeping, and her whole being is consumed with the effort not to weep. Her rigid self-control and composure is tragic and terrifying. This portrait "was the psychological likeness of living death ... the mask of a living

[9] Malraux: La Tete d'obsidienne: p.128-9. ASH: p.264.

void."[10]

When Francoise Gilot arrived in Picasso's life, he tormented Dora Maar unmercifully. Gilot did what she could to prevent the grosser confrontations taking place, but all the same, Dora Maar was twice found wandering round the streets of Paris in a beaten up daze at dead of night. She confronted Picasso and Eluard in the huge studio and was so obviously mentally disturbed that Professor Lacan was called, the only doctor who Picasso would consult, who was a psychiatrist. "As an artist, you may be extraordinary, but morally you are worthless." she told Picasso. And: "You both ought to get down on your knees before me, you ungodly pair. I have the revelation of the inner voice. I see things as they really are, past present and future. If you go on living as you have been , you'll bring down a terrible catastrophe on your heads." Eluard for once lost his temper with Picasso, broke a chair and shouted that he, Picasso, was responsible for Dora's condition. Lacan took Dora under his wing, and to his credit, he slowly helped her to pick up the remaining pieces and to live again, but she was permanently damaged.

Three more incidences ocurred before the arrival of Gilot. The

[10] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: P.264.

first was his son Paulo, who was charged in Switzerland with theft. He also boasted of drug dealing. The only way to get him off the charges was to have him declared psychologically incompetent, and Picasso went to Switzerland to see his bankers and arrange for Paulo to enter a clinic for the rich to be declared idiotic. Paulo's godmother, Misia Sert, went to see him and told him he was utterly stupid - if he wanted money for goodness sake steal one of his father's paintings and sell that- far more profitable.

While he was in Switzerland, Picasso went to see Paul Klee, a German taking refuge from the Nazis, living very frugally indeed in exile. Klee was an artist of precise and beautiful paintings of the "invisible reality", with a clear stainless will of immense strength. His body was terminally ill. The meeting between Klee and "the robust Spanish master of all that was visible and decaying"[11] was so strange and strained that Mrs. Klee took to the piano and played Bach. Which would not have helped. Picasso was completely musically illiterate, and Bach merely irritated him. The robust, visible decadence had no communicable contact with the intense spirituality.

The last incidence is, possibly, the worst of his life. Max

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[11] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: p.239.

Jacob was a Jew, always searching for spiritual truth, a poet and painter of gouaches, who had never faltered in his loyalty to and love of Picasso. In 1909, he had a profound religious experience, and converted to Roman Catholicism. After several years, when he was baptized into the Church, he asked Picasso to be his godfather. When the War broke out, he was living outside Paris at Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire, and Picasso went, in 1943, to see him there. He was 67, went to Mass twice a day, and waited for the Gestapo - it had already come for his brother, his sister and his brother-in-law. It came in February, 1944, and he was sent to the detention camp of Drancy, on the long journey to Auschwitz or Dachau. He managed to get a letter to Jean Cocteau: "Dear Jean, I'm writing this on a train out of the kindness of the gendarmes who surround us. We will very soon be in Drancy. This is all I have to say. Sacha, when they talked to him about my sister, said 'If it was him, I could do something!' Well, it is me. Je t'embrace. Max." From Drancy one last appeal reached his friends in Paris: "May Salmon, Picasso, Moricand do something for me." [12]

His friends mobilized all the support they could find. Jean Cocteau wrote a letter about Max, explaining his value and contributions, adding a discreet post-script about his

[12] Andreu: Max Jacob: p.77 & 79. ASH: p.282.

catholicism, signed by all his friends. Except Picasso. The appeal was delivered personally to Von Rose, the councillor in charge of pardons and reprieves at the German Embassy. The absence of one of Max's oldest and most important friends silently thundered. Max's literary executor asked Picasso to try and use his considerable authority with the Germans to intervene. Picasso refused. And he dismissed Max: "It's not worth doing anything at all. Max is a little devil. He doesn't need our help to escape from prison."

On March 6, five or six weeks after Max had been arrested, Von Rose got a release order for him from the Gestapo. He friends drove immediately to Drancy, to be informed that he had died the day before, of pneumonia. He had been weakened by the cold, damp, and filth in his little cell.

Picasso's influence with the Germans was indeed considerable. He ate openly at black market restaurants, had his sculptures cast in bronze, although it was against the law, and he smuggled currency out of the country, which was far more serious. And he could always get away with it. If Andre-Louis Dubois in the Ministry of the Interior was not able to help, he would address himself to Otto Abetz, the German ambassador; and if he too was powerless, Dubois would go as high as Arno Breker, Hitler's

favourite sculptor, who would appeal directly to Himmler's assistant, the SS General Muller. "If you lay a hand on Picasso," Breker had warned Muller at the time of the currency incident, "the world's press will cause such an uproar you'll be left dizzy." And he threatened to appeal directly to the Fuhrer. Muller knew that Hitler had ordered bronze statues in Paris to be melted down to be re-cast for Breker's sculptures. Hitler, said Breker, thought that all artists were innocents, like Parsifal.[13]

Such was Picasso's legendary power. And he refused to even try to help Max Jacob, who he had known from the age of 19. Picasso tried to go to the memorial service, but was too frightened to go into the church. He scuttled up and down outside, frightened to go to a service for a prisoner.

"Max Jacob once asked me why I was so nice with people who didn't really matter and so hard on my friends. I told him I didn't care about the first group, but since I cared very much about my friends, it seemed to me I ought to put our friendship to the test every once in a while. Just to make sure it was as strong as it needed to be," said Picasso.[14] Those were the rules for Picasso. But his friends may NOT test his friendship. That was

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[13] Breker: Paris, Hitler et moi: p. 171, 235. ASH.p.283.

[14] Gilot: Life with Picasso: p.170.

a breach of Picasso's rules. He was furious if mutual friends visited, say, Braque before him when they came to Paris, and told Francoise Gilot that even if he did not want to see them, they should wait outside for him for two or three days if necessary.

Picasso was not accused of collaborating with the Germans, but he did nothing to help France either. He was very happy, though, to be hailed as a war hero. It was part of his publicity. When Francoise Gilot, knowing how frightened he was of the law and officialdom, asked him why he had stayed in Paris when he could have gone to America, he answered, "Staying on is not really a manifestation of courage; it's just a form of inertia. I suppose it's simply that I prefer to be here."

Nigel Gosling, an English journalist, called on Picasso at the end of the war, and described him: Picasso moves about like a stumpy little oriental god. Smaller than expected (great men always are) he was sallow and very firm on his feet, his black monkey eyes startlingly round and wide under the bald dome and scant white hair. He was serious and courteous, but he gave off strongly the Dionysian incandescence of the genius.[15]

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[15] Gosling: Picasso: The Greatest? *Observer Review*, 15th April 1973, p.29.

Picasso joined the Communist party officially in October 1944. The publicity rang round the world. He was welcomed for his "profound humanity", his "moral preoccupations", and his "services to mankind" into the bosom of the Communist party which was the great brotherly family of workers, peasants and intellectuals. Gilot says, with disarming candour: "Although Pablo's art was anathema to most of the Party heirachy, they realized how useful his name and image would be to their cause."[16] "He was totally simple about it," remarks Hilton, "and employed a magnificently inappropriate pre-industrial metaphor to account for his decision: 'I joined the party as one goes to the fountain.'"[17]

Picasso had never read Marx - he never read anything more than a letter unless he was illustrating it - he had no idea of the history, advent or form of growth of communisms. He was untroubled by the literature of the subject, as was said about Einstein of classical physics. The same could be said of Picasso and philosophy, religious dogma and ideologies. And history. He never gave himself the bother of trying to find out what they were. But he did have a copy of the Marquis de Sade- he tried to shock Francoise Gilot with it. It will be remembered

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[16] Gilot: Life with Picasso: p.55.

[17] Hilton: Picasso: p.260.

that Apollinaire had introduced him to the Marquis' writings before the First World War.

"Is it not the Communist Party that works hardest at understanding and moulding the world, at helping the people of today and of tomorrow to become clear-minded, freer, happier? Was it not the Communists who were the bravest in France, just as they were in the USSR or my own Spain? What could possibly have made me hesitate? Fear of finding myself committed? But I have never felt more free nor more wholly myself! And then again I was so impatient to have a country of my own once more: I had always been an exile and now I am not an exile any longer. Until the day when Spain can welcome me back, the French Communist Party has opened its arms to me, and I have found in it those that I most value, the greatest scientists, the greatest poets, and all the glorious, beautiful insurgent faces I saw in those August days when Paris rose: I am once more among my brothers!"[18]

There is a large crack in this bell. He could have gone back to Spain at any time - in fact he did when he felt like it. He was no exile. And it displays a touching, not to say idiotically romantic, idea of the Communists role in the entire war, and

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[18] O'Brian: Picasso: p.373.

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their contemporary behaviour - Stalin was making it brutally clear where the "Iron Curtain" was going to drop and what he intended USSR to be. But this kind of correlation of facts and history was far too impersonal for Picasso. The Communist system claimed a monopoly of truth and power, and that suited Picasso's outlook perfectly. It also demanded the total surrender of a man's being to the Party - and that too was something he perfectly understood - did he not demand it from those around him? And he had always been a good totalitarian- his word was absolute law in his court.

During and at the end of the War, Picasso's art was violent, dark, without hope. When exhibited, it was given qualified approval, but many found it shocking, unfulfilling, unpalatable. He painted *The Charnel House*, to commemorate the liberation of the concentration camps, along the lines of Guernica, but it is a reflection, a repetition of a theme which does not carry conviction. The inevitable distortions and dismemberments are no longer shocking, they are too round, there is too much fat about. And there are the remains of a still life at the top of the painting. It is not serious comment. He did not, in fact, have Dora Maar's intellectual input to make it a socially critical masterpiece. She was still his official mistress, but he had ruined her.

There was even a slight fracas at the Salon d'Automne, when a combination of Picasso's work and Picasso's politics made some students and "gentlemen of advancing years" try and pull the paintings down. There were numerous cartoons about the exhibition, all about shock and dejection. One was a glum-looking Thinker, by Rodin. The caption was "He has been looking like that ever since they hung a Picasso in front of him."

As soon as Paris was liberated, Picasso was inundated with callers, of all nationalities, those who knew him and those who didn't. Most of them left gifts of chocolates, hams, etc. One day Ernest Hemingway called. Picasso was out, but the concierge asked if he would not like to leave M. Picasso a small gift? Hemingway thought for a moment, went back to his GI jeep and left a box of hand grenades with her, marked "For Picasso from Hemingway." The concierge ran out of the lodge and refused to come back until they were removed. Picasso was not much amused either.

PABLO PICASSO

PART III

In 1943, Picasso met Francoise Gilot, a beautiful, highly-educated and intelligent, 21 year old who came from an extremely respectable bourgeois family. Her own history was unusual, in that her father had wanted a son, and treated her as such. He had taken her hunting, fishing, riding, swimming and made her do the things she feared until the fear was extinguished. He had educated her like a boy, she could read and write when she was four, and was familiar with Olympus and algebra from nine years old. She had need of very little sleep, and during the nights she read books from her father's library, Joinville, Villon, Rabelais, Poe and Baudelaire, a broad-minded selection! So by the age of 14, her education was far in excess of anything Picasso had ever bothered with. She adored her grandmother. "With her green eyes and white mane of hair, her swift movements, her love of poetry, her independent spirit, she was the magnetic pole of my life. In my mind there was no limit to her power, and I felt that she could understand everything."[1] And, indeed, her grandmother comes through with incredible strength and wisdom. Francoise was, as her father wished, studying law, but she

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[1] Gilot: Interface, the Painter & the Mask: P.17.

decided to give that up to study art. This provoked a major upheaval, ending with Francoise running away from home to her grandmother's house, and fastening herself to the banisters to prevent her father knocking her out, and dragging her home. She pushed her arms, legs and head through the rails and hung on tight. Fortunately her grandmother arrived home before he could achieve his objective, and put a stop to the physical violence. When he complained bitterly that she was mad, her grandmother offered to take herself and Francoise to two psychiatrists of his choosing to prove the contrary, and they went through with this.

Picasso first saw her, and her friend Genevieve Aliquot, lunching with the actor Alain Cuny. He danced across to their table armed with a bowl of cherries, and demanded an introduction from Cuny. As she (and Genevieve) were painters, an invitation to his studio was instantly taken up, and the acquaintance started.

Francoise continually second-guessed him, and recognised his tricks for what they were. When he made advances, she accepted them quite matter-of-factly, which enraged him. She made it clear that she was at his disposal, but that this was an assertion of control, rather than an admission of surrender. "..I told him, the principle of the victim and executioner didn't interest me," she told him. "You are more English than French-

you've got that English kind of reserve," he snapped. Francoise went on holiday with Genevieve to Les Baux for two weeks, and she told of her experience:

"I remember every detail as though it was today. First of all, the place itself is so special. Dante was there during his exile from Florence, and he was so affected by the setting he made it part of the *Divine Comedy*. And in nearby Arles, Van Gogh did all those extraordinary paintings. While I was there, I had the most incredible mystical experience which challenged every aspect of myself and my life. It was not a momentary thing: there was an inner struggle that went on for days, during which I knew that I had to stop identifying with my ego and my intellect if I was to enter into that transcendent state. I felt on the edge of an abyss, and then on the other side I was sort of remade, bit by bit from nothingness into being."[2]

She went back to Paris, and to see Picasso. Their relationship took on a profound importance. Picasso was clearly very deeply stirred, and was afraid that if they saw each other too often, the relationship would turn out to be more of the same. He asked to see her sparingly. Francoise herself loved him.

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[2] ASH: p.273. Interview with Francoise Gilot.

In spite of this very real love and attraction between Francoise and Picasso, Marie-Therese and Dora Maar were still running in tandem. There was another young girl, Genevieve Laporte who was also a favourite of his, and his wife Olga was still following him around. Slowly they realized that Francoise was more than just a schoolgirl. Apparently at this stage, Francoise only knew of Dora Maar, but she was aware too of Picasso's destructive qualities. He did a series of drawings of two nudes, the Watcher and Sleeper theme. The Watcher was undoubtedly Francoise, but Picasso was not sure if the sleeper was Genevieve Aliquot, her dear friend, or Dora Maar. He decided it was Dora Maar because of the insects in the margin, because he always thought of her as Kafkaesque. Kenneth Clark says the drawings and lithographs in this series are among the best things Picasso ever did. When showing Francoise his Vollard Suite he explained that the sculptor's style is ambiguous. "It's like God's. God is really only another artist. He invented the giraffe, the elephant, and the cat. He has no real style. He just keeps on trying other things."[3] Clark too sees that Picasso feels like an angry god when working, either that or a naughty child.[4]

By 1946, Picasso was putting Francoise under considerable

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[3] Gilot: Life with Picasso: p.43.

[4] Clark: The Nude. p.351.

pressure to move in with him. So far, she had refused. She was fully aware of how dangerous Picasso could be, and furthermore she was extremely hesitant about inflicting such pain and shame on her grandmother. For an unmarried, catholic, bourgeois, well-educated 21 year old girl to move in with a bohemian spanish painter of revolting morals who was old enough to be her grandfather would be an action of deliberate cruelty and denial. Picasso arranged for her to go to Golfe-Juan in the south of France to think things over, and learn etching from Monsieur Fort, an old master craftsman, in whose house she was staying. She asked Genevieve Aliquot, a longstanding and beloved friend, to come and stay with her, and wrote to Picasso to tell him she was learning well and that he was not to bother to come and see her. It was a gross tactical error. He thought she did not want to see him again, and arrived the evening of the day he got the letter, and they had their first real confrontation. "The war was over," Francoise said, "and there I was, suddenly confronted with the same kind of violence on the personal level. He grabbed my arms, took his cigarette and held it right on my cheek for what seemed like forever. I could feel my face burning, but I was so stunned, I thought this whole thing was so incredible, instead of screaming I talked to him: You can destroy my beauty, I said, but you are not going to destroy me. You can burn me if you like, go ahead, but what you are burning

is the thing you say you like. He just kept holding the cigarette there through everything I said, until he finally removed it. There was a big hole left and a scar that stayed for years. He pulled away the cigarette but his rage wasn't spent. What infuriated him even more was that I hadn't screamed and pleaded with him to stop, that he hadn't been able to break me. If anything, I dared him to go on, to show his true colours by destroying what he claimed he loved. The whole thing was so barbaric, so ludicrous, so uncalled for, I was too shocked even to be angry. Look at that, I said, look at it, its ugly, and you did it, and you'll have to look at it now...."[5]

Francoise, after this shock, had to decide which course to choose. After three days, she decided to stay with Picasso, who continued to behave abominably, particularly towards Genevieve. Genevieve left. "You are heading for a catastrophe," Genevieve warned her. Francoise thought she was right, but she did not want to avoid it. She stayed behind and faced the Minotaur, wondering if she would have enough strength for it.[6] Picasso stayed at Golfe-Juan with her, and took her to see Matisse who obviously liked her and she liked him. Then they returned to

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[5] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: p.308. Interview with Francoise Gilot.

[6] Gilot: Life with Picasso: p.92.

Paris, and he demanded that she go and live with him. She was only the second woman he had wanted to live with. All his other liaisons only entered his studio when invited.

Francoise was still ambivalent. Her grandmother gave her all the freedom she wanted. She found the idea of abandoning her most unpleasant, and after all, she had not abandoned Francoise. It would be impossible for her grandmother to understand such a move, both she and Francoise operated, mostly, with certain codes of decency in place. Picasso was impatient with all these scruples. He said:

"..So you just come, without giving her any warning. Your grandmother needs you less than I do...
"Look at it this way: What you can bring to your grandmother, aside from the affection you have for her, is not something essentially constructive. When you're with me, on the other hand, you help me to realize something very constructive. It's more logical and more positive for you to be close to me, in view of the fact that I really need you. As far as your grandmother's feelings are concerned, there are things one can do and make them understood, and there are other things that can only be done by *coup d'etat* since they go beyond the limits of another person's understanding. It's almost better to strike a blow and after

people have recovered from it, let them accept the fact." Francoise told him that this sounded very brutal to her.

"But there are some things you can't spare other people. It may cost a terrible price to act in this way but there are moments in life when we don't have a choice. If there is one necessity which for you dominates all others, then necessarily you must act badly in some respect. There is no total, absolute purity other than the purity of refusal. In the acceptance of a passion one considers extremely important and in which one accepts for oneself a share of tragedy, one steps outside the usual laws and has the right to act as one should not act under ordinary conditions."

Francoise asked him how he arrived at that rationalization.

"At a time like that, the sufferings one has inflicted on others, one begins to inflict on oneself equally," he said, "It's a question of the recognition of one's destiny and not a matter of unkindness or insensitivity. Theoretically one might say one hasn't the right to reach out for a share of happiness, however minute it may be, which rests on someone else's misfortune, but the question can't be resolved on that theoretical basis. We are always in the midst of a mixture of good and evil, right and wrong, and the elements of any situation are always hopelessly tangled. One person's good is antagonistic to another's. To choose one person is always in a measure, to kill someone else.

And so one has to have the courage of the surgeon or the murderer, if you will, and to accept the share of guilt which that gives, and to attempt, later on, to be as decent about it as possible. In certain situations one can't be an angel." He finished off: "Every positive value has its price in negative terms and you never see anything very great which is not, at the same time, horrible in some respect. The genius of Einstein leads to Hiroshima."[7] Francoise said that now she was convinced he was the devil.

Picasso's vocabulary always leans towards the negative, the violent, the contradictory. it is necessary to "strike blows", "inflict pain", "purity of refusal", values have "prices in negative terms." In every single quotation of what Picasso said, there are regular negative statements. His own desires are paramount, and he gets his way by insistence and agression. "People say that I seek. I don't. I find."[8] And Picasso has the right to take it, at whatever cost in pain for others, because of his destiny and his genius. The only "sin" is to thwart his will. He wanted Francoise very badly, because, as he described it, she had "her own window on the Absolute," her very quality of being, which even in extremity she kept to herself.

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[7] Gilot: Life with Picasso: p.93 ff.

[8] Taschen: Picasso: P. 25.

He could not violate her being, or soul, as he had with all the others. And if he had not been by this time so old and set in his ways - he was 67 - she may well have been catalyst which could have started him growing back to humanity. But his habits and his ego were fixed, and even though he recognised his need for her, he could not deny his other addictions, i.e. the desire for total control through manipulation, administered with the cunning of a master inquisitioner.

There was yet the small problem of Dora Maar, still in therapy, still very, very fragile. Picasso assured Francoise that he had ended his relationship with her, but he kept engineering meetings with her when he had insisted Francoise accompany him. He tried very hard for a confrontation like those between Marie-Therese and Dora Maar, which he had enjoyed so much, but both Dora Maar and Francoise checkmated the attempts, dear though they cost Dora Maar. She assured Francoise - at Picasso's insistence - that there was nothing of the relationship left between herself and Picasso, and then turned on him to say: "You've never loved anyone in your life - you don't know how to love."

Francoise was deeply shaken by the violence and the pain of this scene. He often humiliated and hurt Dora in front of her, embarrassed her (not for the first time) and demonstrated that he

had no idea whatsoever of other people or their feelings. After such a revelation, she was certainly not going to rush into his arms. His reply is more of the same viewpoint - indulging his insatiable taste for cruelly emotional scenes: "I did that for you. Just to make you realize there's nobody else as important as you in my life. And this is the thanks I get - your aloofness and a bawling-out. You're not able to feel intensely about anything. You have no grasp of what life is really like. I ought to throw you into the Seine. That's what you deserve." And he pushed her into a semi-circular set-back on the Pont Neuf and bent her forcefully over the parapet looking down into the water. "How would you like it?" he said. "Go ahead," said Francoise, "It's spring now, and I am a good swimmer." Finally he let her go and she ran away from him.[9] It was the lack of fear which he found so baffling. He himself was easily frightened.

Francoise asked herself why she remained with Picasso, in spite of her knowledge of him. All fear had been burnt out of her as a small child, by her father. In fact it went the full circle, and she would look for things she feared and confront them. When she met Picasso, she knew that he was larger than life, frightening, overpowering, but "fear itself can be a delicious

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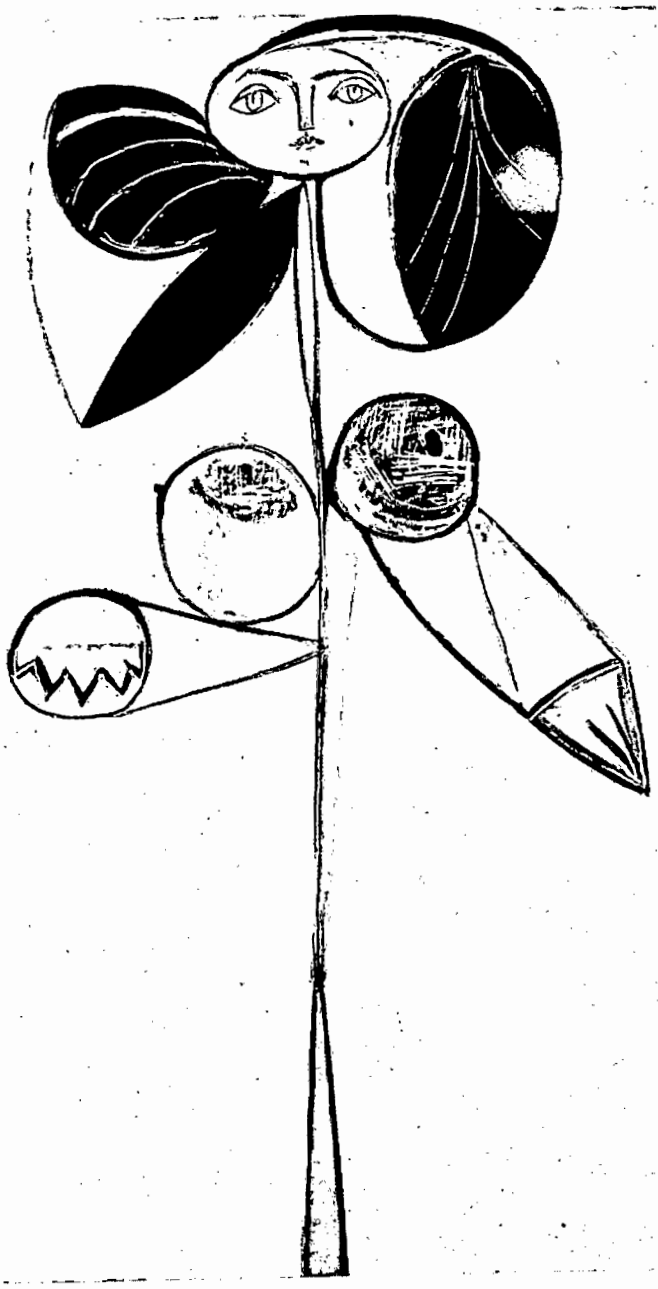
[9] Gilot: Life with Picasso: p.100.



La Femme-Fleur. Portrait of Françoise Gilot by Picasso, May, 1946

sensation."[10] So she turned back, and confronted him. Apart from that, she loved him, deeply and passionately, in spite of herself. When she finally moved in with him, she did it as he wanted her to - she just did not return to her grandmother's house one night, after a violent scene. Even though it was a qualified victory for Picasso - she told him that she found his violence so pathetic, (he threatened her with his leather belt) and his reasoning so childish that he must love her very much. He dictated the letters she wrote to her mother and grandmother. He had won.

He painted her portrait - the famous Femme-Fleur, or Woman-Flower. It is one of his beautiful paintings, delicate and sympathetic.

He took her down to Provence, to Menerbes. He trapped her into staying in a house he had exchanged for a still life, and given to Dora Maar, unpleasant for her and for Dora who had been bullied into agreeing to lending it. Picasso reasoned that if he had given Dora the house he had a right to do what he liked with it. It was full of scorpions, and Francoise escaped from it as soon as she could. One day Picasso took her into a chapel in Antibes. He insisted that she swear to love him all her life, in

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[10] Gilot: Life with Picasso: p.102.

the chapel. As he trumpeted his atheism and scorned God, she was a little surprised. "I think its better done here than just anywhere. Its one of those things. You never know." So they swore.

Picasso told Francoise that she ought to have a child, it was the best thing for her. She eventually had two children, Claude and Paloma. They spent more and more time in the Midi, at La Galloise in Vallauris, because neither the huge studios of the Rue des Grands-Augustins nor Picasso's way of life was suitable for very small children. They were a striking couple, her beauty and his astonishing power. "He would make agressive remarks meant to put down and humiliate her in front of others and she would laugh and make what he said seem innocuous. Watching them together was also like watching a tribal game of which only they knew the rules. She never looked cross or humiliated; she always made you feel that they were acting in a play. That was his way of being; he was cruel whether it was with his woman, his best friends or whoever was around if he felt like it. So if you decided to live with him, you needed unusual strength and unusual maturity to find your part in his play and improvise the text."[11] They were always surrounded by visitors, and so they

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[11] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: p.329. Interview with Dominique Desanti.

worked things out in public.

This "game-playing" was a breath of life to Picasso. Everything was dressed up to look like something else, and when the mask was disturbed, so was he. His painting has the same quality.

He was introduced to pottery at Vallauris, known for its clay goods from Roman times. It was a new art form for him, and he applied his versatility, vitality, his vision and his inventiveness to the craft. He improvised, as he had with Lithography and etching, to such a degree that what he did was revolutionary.

They went to see Matisse again, who was designing a chapel for the Dominicans, who had nursed him through a long and difficult illness. This offended Picasso. "You are crazy to build a chapel for those people - Do you believe in that stuff or not? If not, do you think you ought to do something for an idea that you don't believe in? ... Why don't you build a market instead?" Matisse was quite unmoved. He too had taken to treating Picasso like a brilliant precocious child. He listened, but took not the slightest notice of what he said. Matisse went on to tell Picasso: "As far as I'm concerned, this is essentially a work of art. It's just that I put myself in the state of mind of what

I'm working on. ..... But the essential thing is to put oneself in a frame of mind which is close to that of prayer." And when he worked like that, he was in the best mode to create a simple "religious space" where people could come "to feel purified and freed of their burdens."

"This chapel is for me," said Matisse at the dedication of the Chapel, "the culmination of an entire life's work and the flowering of an enormous, sincere and difficult labor. It is not a labor I chose, but for which destiny chose me at the end of my road... I consider it, despite all its imperfections, my masterpiece, an effort resulting from an entire life dedicated to the search for truth."[12]

Compare Matisse's aim, and destiny with what Picasso said about his painting: "One swallows something, is poisoned by it and eliminates the toxic" was his description of working. He did not believe there was truth at the end of the road - was painting just a catharsis, and elimination process of toxic waste? His paintings certainly constantly bring one's attention to the darker and baser side of human nature. Picasso sensed the higher side strongly, in Matisse, Gilot, Dora Maar, Nusch, Eva, Juan Gris, but when he found it difficult to tap into that very

[12] ASH: Picasso, Creator & Destroyer, p.338.

quality, he denied and ridiculed it, rationalizing his laziness. "It took me a long time to realize what a consummate liar he was," said Francoise.

He went to the Peace Conference in Poland in 1948. He had made the Communist Party accept him on his own terms, as usual. One of the Russian delegates called his art decadent and his "impressionist-surrealist" style was condemned. Picasso replied that the critic was a party hack, he, Picasso, had been condemned by the Nazis, the Americans, and now the Communists so he was accustomed to it, and that the critic would have done better to criticize him for inventing Cubism rather than calling him an impressionist surrealist. The Poles were furious with the Russian for insulting their guest, and apologized for the Russian insults. He also took off his shirt at a press conference to show off his muscles, an action definitely against party propriety.

He stayed away 3 weeks, instead of 4 days, which was his original promise, and detailed off Marcel, his chauffeur, to telegraph Francoise every day in his name, which he had promised to do himself. He did not write to her once. It was obvious that the telegrams were not written by Picasso, and it took no time at all to guess who was sending them. Again, Picasso made his own

rules, could break his promises, behave with the worst possible manners, and still find the victim waiting for him, and what is more, glad to see him. He walked smiling up the stairs of their home, confident of a delighted welcome. Francoise slapped him hard and then locked herself in Claude's room for the night.

Picasso could, and did, add an extra dimension, a transcendent quality to lovemaking. "When he gave of himself, he gave totally. It was easy for the woman to feel like Psyche in the myth of Psyche and Eros: having tasted of love divine, she would go to the end of the earth to find it again."[13] And with Picasso, several women stayed by the source, whatever the cost, and many only left after the most graphic humiliations. Whatever it was that he exuded, or was capable of arousing, it would appear to be addictive. This Dionysian quality was undoubtedly real and powerful in him. One biographer likened him to Krishna, who, when he made love to a woman, caused her to try forever to re-capture the bliss. Coco Chanel, the fashion designer, confessed that she "was swept by a passion for him. He was wicked. He was fascinating like a sparrow hawk, he made me a little afraid. I felt it when he arrived: something would shrivel within me. He is there! I wouldn't see him yet, but I

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[13] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: p. 345. Interview with Francoise Gilot.

would know that he was in the room... He had a way of looking at me... I trembled."[14] This quality must have formed part of the mystery of Picasso, and contributed to the sale of his pictures. In his work, this taste of sensual divine love, with its element of corruption and torture, was subliminally attractive.

But, very few of the women he seduced remained for any length of time in his life. And the more capable, gifted, beautiful and spiritually strong the woman, the longer she stayed in his life, and the strongest of all stayed more or less ten years, with the exception of Marie-Therese, who remained true to him until after he died - 40 years after he met her. They stayed in his life on his conditions only, even Francoise Gilot. And being a good totalitarian, he insisted on not only obedience, but acceptance of his value system, such as it was. There were two women, however, who were totally unmoved by him. One was Francoise's grandmother, who was very few years older than he, and more than a match. He even tried to charm her, to no avail whatsoever. And the other was Dominique Eluard, wife to Paul after Nusch had died. She found the aura of awe around him idiotic, and his primitive god/angry child behaviour ridiculous. She paid, of course, by being ridiculed, denigrated, insulted and

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[14] Retouches pour un portrait: *Le Crapouillet*, No. 25, June, 1973. p.41. ASH: p.178.

discriminated against by his acolytes, and being put, when she was ill, in a very damp cold room.

He used money in his arsenal for power over others. For example, Francoise had no money. She had run away from her father, who had naturally stopped paying anything for her, and it never occurred to her grandmother that living with a multi-millionaire, Francoise could possibly want for money. She was in a lose-lose situation: "I have never been so poor in my life as when I was with Pablo. ...Marie Cuttoli had dresses made for me, since I couldn't afford any of my own. It was one more way to exert his power over me, to have me ask for things, since he believed that he could buy me emotionally if I needed him financially. and I didn't want to do this, especially since I loved him and I knew that if he could humiliate me he would lose his respect for me. If I asked for anything material, he could then accuse me of being trapped in the bourgeois game of possessions and he would be the pure one. The way his mind worked, I would then be nobody and he would once again be alone on the mountaintop. He was so acutely aware of the balance of power in a relationship... So I asked for nothing - not for clothes, not for a better house, even though we were living in a really ugly, small house. And when I asked for more help with the children and the house, he would find all sorts of ingenious ways of refusing." The money, as a

substance, did not worry him. It was the manipulation of it which gave him the power over someone else. One of his true enjoyments was watching one of his victims struggling against a difficult situation which he himself had created.

The relationship between Picasso and Francoise was deteriorating. Picasso was cavorting around the French coast being as promiscuous as he could be. One biographer says that this raging sexuality was fuelled by the fear of death, of old age, of the sap failing to rise.[15] Maybe, but he was also trying to provoke and hurt Francoise. He was 73 years old.

Francoise's grandmother died in Paris, and when she went to the funeral, she reconciled her differences with her father, who had read of Picasso's promiscuity in the press. He gave her to understand that if she had the strength to leave Picasso, he would support her and her children emotionally and materially. She realized that her invidious position was widely known, and when she returned to Vallauris she confronted Picasso with a demand that he have the courage to admit the truth. He consistently denied that there was anyone else in his life, and that he had casual affairs. He blamed her for it, if it was true, he said, and then denied again that there was anything

[15] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: p.369.

changed.

At this time Marcel, Picasso's chauffeur and friend, was fired abruptly after 25 years faithful service. He had been involved in all Picasso's affairs for that time. He was one of the few people to whom Picasso would occasionally listen. One day Marcel took his wife and child out for a drive in Picasso's car, and ran into a tree. He lost his job immediately, without notice or compensation. "He knows that he's not supposed to drive the car on his days off." said Picasso. Marcel spoke his mind: "You think you can do anything to anybody. ... you have no heart. You will suffer for that, you'll see. You'll drive every decent human being away. Next it will be Mademoiselle (Gilot) who leaves you."[16] Picasso was quite unmoved, bought a new Hotchkiss and told his son Paulo that if he wanted any more money from him, he had to take Marcel's place and become his driver. He did.

Eventually, Francoise did leave him. She moved out at the end of September, 1953. "Nobody leaves a man like me," he said, and assumed she was playing games just like him. He was incapable of believing that anyone ever spoke the truth. When the taxi arrived and took Francoise and the children to the station, he

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[16] ASH: Picasso, Creator & Destroyer: p.374. Interview with Francoise Gilot.

shouted "Merde" at the departing car and stumped inside in a rage which lasted for the rest of his life. He had been unable to bring any honesty or courage to the relationship, and Francoise had found him less and less attractive, until she even found him repulsive in bed. She returned to Paris, her old friends and her family, and when she was sufficiently recovered she married Luc Simon, the antithesis of Picasso, apart from the fact that he was an artist.

Picasso deteriorated steadily over the next twenty years. He became crueller, malicious and contrary, ill-mannered, jealous- in fact there seems to be no redeeming quality whatsoever. After a lengthy and varied parade (by his friends and well-wishers) of women who might possibly replace Francoise, a little divorcee with a daughter eventually won the place. She was Jacqueline Roque, who helped at the pottery studio at Vallauris and who spoke Spanish with Picasso. She worked with her whole being at becoming indispensable to "Monseigneur," a doormat who put all her energies into preserving the fiction that Picasso was immortal. The stories and incidents of Picasso's inhumanity and cruelty just go on and on in sickening repetition. Neither friends, relatives, acquaintances nor hosts were excepted from his ill-nature. Olga, his first wife, finally died, separated but not divorced, and quite alone.

In 1961 he married Jacqueline. The Picassos now set about admitting only those friends who they liked. His son Paulo still drove for Picasso, but less and less because he was so often drunk and drugged. Picasso's immediate family was inexorably excluded from his life. He refused to see any one of them, repeatedly.

Francoise found that no agent would take her work. Picasso had let it be known that if any agent sold anything of hers, they would sell nothing of his. She had taken the precaution of legally wresting money from him for the children (after an incident when Paloma had acute appendicitis when staying with her father. Maya called Francoise back from honeymoon, and when she arrived Picasso would not send Paloma out to her immediately). It was the only way she could get paternity recognised. Only after he had shut himself up in his chateau, and determinedly cut himself off from all his children, did she attempt to publish her book, "Life with Picasso." He took her to court three times to try and stop it. But unfortunately for Picasso she had said nothing that could not be corroborated, and French law decided that the invasion of his privacy was negligible, having lived in the hot glare of the press for so long. There was another legal battle to get the children recognised as his, and Picasso's own

lawyer, Izard, eventually offered his services to Francoise, because he felt Picasso was being so very unfair. Izard was, of course, France's most prestigious advocate at that time.

The work Picasso was producing was no longer up to his previous standards. Technically, as ever, he was superb, but the work lacked the depth and insight which a genius well used by experience is capable of. It is full of personal complaint. His portraits of Jaqueline were reasonable in the beginning, but she saw herself getting uglier and more fractured and grossly insulted in paint as the years went by. Very few of them are well-known. He did a series of drawings which were autobiographical, the artist portrayed as a little plump old satyr, or an old man, or an old courtier, drawing the most beautiful young models, who are no longer affected by the artist. They are un-involved and unmoved by the artist's tricks and jokes, or his sexual assaults. They patiently wait, their attention detached. They even fall asleep. The models are no longer an extension of the artist, a factor which is almost a hall-mark of Picasso's work. Sex, in anticipation, action and retrospect was the dominant motive.

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and when it was unveiled in 1958, it was not at all clear whether Picasso was serious or not. It was a despairing depiction of the Fall of Icarus, in a building dedicated to hope. Was it a masterpiece or a giant doodle? If there is any doubt whatsoever, its a doodle. A masterpiece stands on its own at any time in any language. Le Courbusier, the original and innovative architect in concrete, was the only one with positive criticism - he declared that in 20 years time its beauty would be obvious. Over 35 years on, no more is said of it except that it is large, executed by Picasso in 1958. It has no other claim to fame. It's beauty is no more obvious now that it was in 1958.

A positive acquisition during the last 20 years of his life was three chateaux. La Gallois, the ugly little house in Vallauris he had bought and given to Francoise Gilot, became too small and he bought La Californie, a delightful property which had been owned by the Moet champagne family. He had been under pressure to give up the Rue des Grand-Augustins because of the desperate housing shortage in Paris after the war, and buildings and flats, which were under-utilized were being requisitioned. He resisted, through contacts and string pulling, until 1967, when the final and ultimate bureaucracy caught up with him. Both flats in the Rue de la Boetie, which he had acquired when married to Olga, were closed and untouched and full. Picasso never threw anything away, added to which he actively collected anything and

everything. So the huge quantity of stuff in his Studios in the Rue des Grands-Augustins had to be moved down into La Californie. It must have been a nightmare move - from which Picasso stayed firmly aloof. Further, he ordered and Jacqueline executed the removal of everything - comprehensively everything - from La Gallois, which included all of Francoise's clothes, records papers, drawings, paintings, books, private letters and furniture.

The film, *The Mystere Picasso* was made by George Clouzot. Clouzot had invented a substance which, when painted on the canvas went immediately through, so that the camera behind could follow the brushstrokes that Picasso made. Picasso worked feverishly, upholding the myth of the inexhaustible Picasso, but every now and again the film had to wait for a few days while he recovered from near collapse, and at the end he needed weeks and weeks to rest.

Picasso, at this time, "re-organized" a number of old Masters. Works by Delacroix, Velasquez, Goya, Poussin, Manet, Giorgione, he would re-paint in his own style, which was to fracture and distort the original forms. He must have done thirty at least of the *Las Meninas* by Velasquez. The extraordinary thing is that most of his more important works from this time are these

119 *Picasso.*
Woman.
Apple,
Monkey,
Man.
26 January
1954

120 *Picasso.*
Woman and
Monkey
Painting.
10 January
1954

variations on borrowed themes, and certainly not original.

La Californie was already full, and very close to Cannes, fast becoming highly fashionable and very crowded. Picasso then bought the Chateau de Vauvenargues, in a valley under the Mount Sainte-Victoire, which Cezanne had painted again and again. He bought it, and moved in. From its description and history, it was a house with a personality, no running water, drains or central heating. It could also be over-looked, which people did with binoculars and enthusiasm. Jacqueline hated it because of the atmosphere there, and Picasso too felt uncomfortable. Perhaps it was haunted. Two years later he bought a third chateau, Mas Notre Dame de Vie, at Mougins, behind Cannes, but close to his old stamping grounds. Vauvenargues and Mougins were surrounded with security, Johannesburg style, dogs, fences, guards and gates, and it became more and more difficult to gain access unless one was one of the chosen members of his court.

The court was required to amuse him, praise him, keep him happy, and above all, preserve the illusion that he was immortal. John Berger wrote: "Picasso is the king. Everything and everybody revolves round him. His whim is law. No word of criticism is ever heard. There is a great deal of talk but very little serious discussion. Picasso behaves and is treated like a child.

who has to be protected.... He decorates pots and plates that other men make for him. He is reduced to playing like a child. He becomes again the child prodigy. .... To fill the vacuum left by reality, it is necessary to invent. His life is full of fantasies and specially created dramas....characters, rituals, turns of phrase. Everything is lifted up and made 'truer than life' by his devotees, so that he shall never feel lost in emptiness."[17]

In spite of the great care that he took - and was taken of him, he aged. He was operated on for a prostate and gallbladder in 1965, and appeared to recover quite well. But he saw fewer and fewer people, and those selected to be favourites did more and more duty. For example the Pignons were expected to drop all their Christmas and New Year arrangements at the last moment and go and spend an extremely difficult and demanding time at Notre Dame de Vie. For his eightieth birthday, there were almost national (French) celebrations, his eighty-fifth birthday they had a huge retrospective exhibition. He refused this at first, and then blamed Jacqueline for wanting it, told her to go ahead with arranging it, he wanted nothing to do with it, and retired to bed for a week to sulk. But he was very pleased with all the fuss and excitement which necessarily went into the organization.

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[17] Berger: Success & Failure of Picasso: p. 180 & 181.

He felt, said Helene Parmelin, more and more like the myth of Sisyphus, condemned to roll his heavy stone up a hill, day after day, always having it roll back as he reached the top. "Worst of all is that he never finishes. There's never a moment when you can say, 'I've worked well and tomorrow is Sunday.' As soon as you stop, its because you've started again. You can put a picture aside and say you won't touch it again. But you can never write THE END."[18] "Completing something means killing it, depriving it of life and soul."[19] And with his later works Picasso did indeed remain true to his words and concentrated mainly on fragments and series of paintings. It was like a defiant attempt to bargain with Death and gain a few more hours from him, so that the word "completed" would not become applicable just yet. In the last years of his life painting had become an obsession with Picasso, and he would date each picture abolutely precisely, thus creating in his latest works a vast amount of similar paintings, crystallizatioins of individual moments of timeless happiness, knowing that in the end everything would be in vain.
One is reminded of the creation story. Evidently an artist like Picasso, who is his own mythical god, cannot create rest.

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[18] Parmelin, Picasso: Intimate Secrets of a Studio at Notre Dame de Vie, p.67-68. ASH. p.453.

[19] Taschen: Picasso: p. 86.

The vitality of this renowned artist had enabled him to defy death for the length of almost two human lifetimes, but Art, his magic formula, had to become more and more emphatic to keep it at bay. He did not look back on his life with self-satisfaction, and it is impossible to find in them an easily understandable common denominator that might sum up the whole of his art as a kind of heritage. Rather it is a continuous fight against death in different forms. ...His style of painting showed that he was trying to avoid the issue, while at the same time reacting against an understanding of art that is based on orderliness and nature. Picasso's late works are an expression of his final refusal to fit into categories.[20]

By 1969, he was ailing. "His body was a sack of ills and frustrated desires....He could not see well, he could not hear well, his lungs fought for breath, his limbs fought for the strength to sustain him and he fought for the unconsciousness of sleep. But a sickness much more frightening than the inevitable sicknesses of a man close to ninety was the soul-sickness of a man close to death and utterly disconnected from the source of life, a man staring at death and seeing his own fearful

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[20] Taschen: Picasso: p;.86.

imaginings." [21] He repeated time and again: "You must never equate age with death. The one has nothing to do with the other."

He had degenerated into a suspicious and jealous (of youth) old man. It showed in his paintings. He had an exhibition at Avignon in 1970, which was slated by the critics, even Douglas Cooper who had been a longstanding and ardent admirer of Picasso's work, who said that he had looked "long at the pictures and they were nothing but the incoherent scribbling of a frenetic old man in the antechamber of death."[22] Picasso drew and painted continually and frantically, as though constant work would prevent death from getting him, but: "I do worse every day," he said in a rare moment of self-awareness. He drew a self-portrait which reveals his terror.

He died on April 8, 1973. Over ninety one years old. His last words to his doctor were "you are wrong not to be married. Its useful." Jacqueline was distraught, repeating over and over again that he had no right to leave her, he could not do this to her. Manuel Pallares, his oldest surviving friend aged 97, read about Picasso's death in the paper, and travelled instantly to

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[21] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer. p.457.

[22] Cabanne: Pablo Picasso: p.569. ASH. p.462.

Mougins to try and see him. He was refused admittance, as everyone was, and was left standing in the rain. Jacqueline, for some reason, decided to have Picasso buried at Vauvenargues, the home he disliked, and the funeral cortege did not go on the motorway, she chose to go round a back route. The road was blocked by snow and a jack-knifed lorry, so it took a great deal of time to get the coffin to Vauvenargues, where a reception committee waited and waited for them. Paulo was drunk, but he was the only member of Picasso's family present that Jacqueline would allow. When the funeral cortege finally got to the chosen burial place, it was found to be solid rock, and so the sound of pneumatic drills rent the air. Jacqueline put one of Picasso's bronze statues over the grave, a nude which she did not realize was inspired by Marie-Therese. Which was quite fitting. He had written to her a week before he died telling her again that she was the only woman he had loved.

There was no will, and the assessment, legalities, divisions, valuations of his estate was a battle of legendary proportions. Eventually it was resolved, the lawyers fees equal to at least one share of the estate. He owned four huge dwellings, Boisgeloup, La Californie, Vauvenargues and Notre Dame de Vie, and three big flats in Paris. All of which were crammed with his works and everything else he had collected. Several years after

his death, the estate was finally distributed.

After Picasso died, his grandson Pablito drank bleach. He spent six months in hospital while the doctors tried to save his savaged stomach and intestines, but he died. His hospital bills and treatment were paid for by Marie-Therese, who felt that Picasso's family were vitally important. Marie-Therese hanged herself on the 50th anniversary of her meeting with him, unable to stand life without him, and sure that he needed her to look after him still. Jacqueline shot herself in October, 1986. Paulo died at the age of 55, of cirrhosis of the liver and drug abuse.

Such is the tragic legacy of Picasso. His art must be seen in conjunction with our times, which includes the disintegration during this century in tradition, philosophy, religion. This largely negative view of life was brought to music by Schoenberg and Bartok, to literature by Kafka and Bertolt Brecht, and to art by Picasso. They lived without belief in an ultimately real, and their modernist vision of the world was, in the end, negative. "He (Picasso) was without doubt the most Faustian artist of a Faustian modernity, but the infinite that was his goal excluded any reconciliation with God."[23] "He saw his role

[23] Daix: Picasso Createur: p.387. ASH.p.473.

as a painter as fashioning weapons of combat against every emotion of belonging in creation and celebrating life, against nature, human nature and the God who created it all."[24] Picasso constantly denied any tenderness in his prolific creativity, and he sought to possess and dominate anything to which he responded. It was as though anything that caught his fancy should be broken down and remoulded by him, as he willed. Unfortunately he did it without compassion or kindness, and as a result his creations looked for the most part distorted monsters, filled with pain and bewilderment. He did indeed die never having loved.

Another quality that disintegrated in Picasso's art, and therefore in himself, was beauty and/or harmony. It was another casualty along with tradition, philosophy and religion. Once he had painted the Demoiselles d'Avignon, in 1907, the first of his really fractured hate paintings, he worked hard to deny beauty wherever he found it. In relation to his output, very few of his works can be classified beautiful. He preferred uncoordinated surroundings, untidy and chaotic, his homes were not restful or peaceful or beautiful. He even tried to destroy the physical beauty of his women, and his terror of aging made him doubly cruel to them.

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[24] ASH: Picasso, Creator & Destroyer: p.474.

But right to the end of his life, he strove to paint the ultimate painting, that would say it all. As he approached death, he painted more and more furiously, missing it again and again. "How difficult it is to get something of the absolute into the frog pond," he said when he was 85. Yes, but with his prodigious ability, his technical skill, virtuosity and his genius, if anyone could do it he should have been able to. But he never did, he only showed the dark and the mud, and the pain and fear and rage. In 1914, Yakov Tugendhold, a Russian art critic had written: "Tragedy presides over the work of this intrepid Don Quixote, this knight errant of the absolute...doomed to an eternal and hopeless quest. For art, which is essentially dynamic, cannot be everlasting; it only touches eternity when man, in love with the world, 'implores the fleeting instant to remain.'" Picasso always felt he could stop the fleeting instant and freeze it on his own terms. In the end his ego and his arrogance betrayed him. His Protean creativity was a sufficient reality to him to encourage him to despise old age and death, until it was too late. It would seem that he had no faith or trust in an after-life whatsoever. He faced the void as a void, and not even his immense genius could help him deny his physical death.

CONCLUSION.

Picasso denied the *religious culture* of his time completely, in his case, Spanish Roman Catholicism. He was an ardent atheist, convinced that he himself was equal to any being, divine or not. He was accused of "fetishism" during his life, which he hotly refuted, but there is no doubt he was highly superstitious.

Picasso's gift, or talent, was *"bigger"* than most other artists. However, he did not express much Christianity in his work. There is one painting published of the Crucifixion, but it is not an important work. Some critics have tried to identify Christian motives in his work, but they are not convincing. For his own experience, Picasso found the Greek myths more to his liking and several times he was called "Pan". The Minotaur, the horse, the matador, pigeons, candles, masks are some of the recurring themes, but the primary theme in Picasso's work is sex, sometimes exuberant, sometimes sordid, sometimes normal and sometimes deviant. His personal *sense of reality was conceptualized* graphically and repeatedly. If he expanded experience and expression of experience, it was to condition his audience to accept what he painted with awe and delight instead of discrimination, portrayals which often turned against the old values of accepted traditions. [1.i.]

Picasso was a genius painter. He has been called the genius of the century, and he thought he was *incomparable*, unique, "I wanted to be a painter, but I became Picasso!" he said. [1] [1.i.i.]

He tried writing poetry and two plays, but they were not successful. But if the meaning of genius is taken to mean the underlying blueprint, or thought form, of our century, then it is a mercy this century has come to a close. Picasso certainly reflected, in his art, what has happened this century.
Jerome Seckler, a young communist journalist for the "New Masses" wrote about the exasperation that he and his friends experienced in analyzing Picasso: "The only conclusion we could ever arrive at was that Picasso, in his various so-called 'periods', quite accurately reflected the very hectic contradictions of the times, but only reflected them, never painting anything to increase one's understanding of these times." It was a conclusion much more devastating than Seckler realized. He was reducing Picasso's art to nothing more than brilliant reporting on the century's discontents.[2] [1.i.i.]

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[1] Taschen: Introduction.

[2] Seckler: Picasso Explains: New Masses, 13th March, 1945. p.4. ASH: p.294.

Picasso's *talent (genius) for expression* exceeded what he had to say. He was driven to try again and again to paint the ultimate work which would say everything, but this he never achieved. He is a classic case of arrested development in some elements of being, and over-development in others, producing a person who could not ever be whole, who could not logically belong to the ultimate reality, and therefore could not understand it.

[1.i.ii.]

Picasso's monumental ego, Dionysian charisma, his refusal to use his intellect or any self-discipline, hampered him fatally. His *self-expression was more than adequate*, but he was unable to bring himself to a point where he could harness it to express something greater than himself. He painted *compulsively*, furiously, but he was really only exercising his talent, not expressing anything new or original. His immense ability and genius were not enough to overcome the obstacles within. He never achieved it, but he knew that Matisse had come much closer to it than he had. Rather like Salieri, who could not aspire to the heights that Mozart reached, and it was agony recognizing it. Picasso recognised it, but unlike Salieri, he had more genius than Matisse, and he could have got even closer. Picasso could be the greatest tragic miss of our times.

Religion:

Picasso never stood back from *"all-that-out-there". All-that-out-there* was his own creation. He was a magician, he could see things differently and in different contexts and perform transformations. A set of handlebars and a saddle became a bull's head. Two dinky cars became the head of a monkey. An intelligent mistress became unhinged. A seventeen year old girl became - and stayed - no more than a private sex object. He turned himself into a Minotaur, a sculptor, the artist, the bull, all he had to do was to draw it. Reality for him was the stage set as he wanted it round him. So when Francoise Gilot defied the plot, as she did when she told him that if he was unaware of how much he hurt Dora Maar, she was off, she threw him completely off-balance. From a comparatively early age, 30 onwards, he could afford to indulge his reality, living expensively in bohemian splendor. He was rich enough to isolate himself, play his games, to afford communism, even through the major Depression of the Thirties and a World War. [1.ii.i.]

He most certainly did not enjoy any cosmic trust. He always saw life as painful, tricky, untrustworthy, sordid, dark and tragic. He did not, could not, belong to the "World-out-there." He created his own world, in which he was the most important being. Most of his work, throughout his life, testifies to his mistrust,

and his determination to keep reality at bay by work, sex, and yet more work. He was adept at publicity, and he carefully and cleverly fostered the myth which grew up around him. As he got older, the myth gained power. He had no value at all for goodness, truth or beauty, faith, hope or charity, or the community. [1.ii.ii.]

Picasso had no *sense of providence*. So, he had a great fear of death. He could never bring himself to end anything, the finality was too like death. He wrested from life that which he wanted, and with his determination, charisma and ego, very rarely was his will thwarted. He could, when he wanted to be, present almost any aspect he wanted - humble great artist, vitally alive old man, sweeping lover (that one was pretty genuine!), a great wit, or profound thinker, and his interlocutor would be completely taken in. He was there to ordain, not to provide - in fact HE was providence - his court and friends should wait three days by the gate in order to see him, if they really loved him. He felt just being near the sun of his being was a reward for the lesser mortals. [1.ii.iii.]

Picasso was superstitious and communist. With a little bit of Christian ritual left in a tiny corner of his being. But his communism was very qualified. Had he been a normal man, he

would never have been accepted by the party. But he was too prestigious a catch for refusal, his own myth helped him. But it is possible that his joining of the communist party was an attempt to stay on the side of the winners. After the war the communists were well to the fore, good publicity, a number of the intellectual avant garde belonged, and with his intuitive cunning, he wanted to be on the right side. As stated before, he had very little idea of communist philosophy, or what practical forms it could take. He took Casanova, the head of the communist party, to eat at an expensive restaurant, and they were photographed. Casanova was worried, and said it was bad publicity for the communists. Picasso was annoyed and said "You're above that. You're not a boy scout." "You don't understand how people's minds work," Casanova said, "I don't mean just our people, but the general public." And sure enough, Casanova was rapped over the knuckles by party officials. Picasso could never understand nuances outside his own personal ambit. He was outstandingly ignorant of the communists' horror of luxury. And he would no more have given up his Bohemian luxury than cut off his painting right arm. [1.ii.iv.]

He teased Kahnweiler, his agent, to become a communist. Kahnweiler eventually stopped the nonsense with simple and effective reply which proved again that Picasso had no idea of

the internal mechanics of the communist party.[1] [1.ii.iv.]

Picasso *espoused* Communism just after the war. Its *institutional standing* was such that it was condemned by the governments of the time, but was very fashionable and daring among the *avant-garde* art world and the intellectuals. To join the communist party was slightly daring in the Forties. [1.ii.v.]

Shaping Experience or Context.

Picasso was an artist from the age of seven. The moment he could hold a pencil he started drawing. He was a child prodigy. There was never any question but that he would become an artist. [2.i.i.]

Personality.

Picasso's *personality* was powerful. His ego was wildly overpowering. He found he could make people accept him on his own terms, love and obey him no matter what, that he could do what he liked and get away with it, and that he could make most people believe in him. These egotistical indulgences became a pleasurable game to him in his 20s and 30s, but after that it became an addiction, getting more of a hold on him as he got older. The point came where, as with Francoise Gilot, he could no longer stop the game, even when he wanted to. Another over-

endowment was his "Dionysian charisma." This powerful personal magnetism enabled him to heighten experience for those around him, particularly for the women with whom he made love. Those who experienced it could become addicted. Several of the people close to him admitted naturally that his capriciousness was extremely painful, but just as naturally accepted this as the price of staying within his presence. He exercised this power over men as well as women - both sexes suffered equally at his hands. Jean Cocteau wrote of Picasso in late 1950s: "A procession of objects follows in Picasso's wake, obeying him as the beasts obeyed Orpheus. That is how I would like to represent him: and every time he captivates a new object he coaxes it to assume a shape which he makes unrecognizable to the eye of habit. Our shape-charmer disguises himself as the king of the rag-pickers, scavenging the streets for anything he may find to serve him."

Picasso's arrested development was most noticeable in his mental processes and emotional age. His mental process were potentially excellent, with a quick ability for repartee, funny, sarcastic or cruel, leaving the witnesses laughing guiltily and the victim devastated. The worst example of this involved, as usual, intelligent Dora Maar. After Francoise Gilot had left him, Picasso dined unexpectedly with Douglas Cooper, who had already invited Dora Maar and James Lord. Dora Maar had been

out of his life for 10 years. Picasso exerted his Dionysian charisma and Dora was instantly re-captured. He got up from the table, went to her place and told her he wanted to speak to her privately, and as they walked together down the big room he put her arm round her, and whispered confidentially. When they got to the end of the room, he immediately returned to the table without her, sat down, leaving her standing alone, humiliated and let down, to make her way sheepishly back to her place.

He never reasoned or discussed. If anyone went contrary to his wishes or ideas, he would accuse them of some weakness, either sensitivity to pleasure or pain, bourgeois sophistry, caring too much about beauty, "you are too young to understand", or "you are only developed on the intellectual level," and so on.

However, he never bothered to think for himself. One reason he was able to talk articulately about his painting was because he liked poets, and at each period they created around him the language of painting. Afterwards Picasso would talk very perceptively about his own painting, because of his intimacy with articulate people who could discover the right words.[3] He did this with philosophies too. He had a good memory, and when his better-informed friends spoke, for example, about Nietschze or

[3] Gilot: Life with Picasso:. p.130.

Hegel, he would remember it and regurgitate what they said with all-knowing authority. He was ignorant of philosophy, history, literature, religious dogma, politics - he read nothing other than letters and his own press cuttings. Except the Marquis de Sade, but that was very useful as a sex guide. Picasso hated Freud - but he never read anything Freud wrote. Fundamentally, he was only interested in himself, and he did not intellectually investigate viewpoints other than his own, so he was unaware that people could think differently. He had no idea whatsoever of the growth or history or philosophy of communism, in spite of the fact that he was a card-carrying member. He condemned religion, without knowing that religious experience existed. There are no incidents of him reasoning step by step, or perceiving cause and effect, except on a superstitious level. He ducked out of any discussion or argument in which he could not lay down the law and clinch the deal with an aphorism. His ideas were fixed, allowing no flexibility.

The other area of arrested development was his self-discipline, or self-control. He never ever made the slightest attempt to behave other than he felt like at the time. The smallest incident could send him into a towering passion. Implied criticism, perceived disloyalty, interruptions, infringement of any of his rules, suggestions or assumptions, could provoke him into behaving like an unpleasant dwarf in a raging tantrum.

Getting him up in the morning took the combined efforts of Sabartes, mistress, Inez (the resident cook/housekeeper) and any guests who were admitted to the holy of holies, his tatty bedroom. He would complain about how bad life was, how nobody loved him, that there was nothing worth getting up for, nobody liked his painting. Life was meaningless. After two or three hours of exhausting supportive encouragement by his entourage, he would finally get up at mid-day or later, receive his guests, work all afternoon, break for supper and then work through until 2 in the morning. The next day the whole process would have to be repeated. When Francoise Gilot was pregnant, she would be weeping from exhaustion by 2 a.m., but she was not let off one second's attendance, and if she betrayed any weakness, he went on until 3 or 4 a.m. All his mistresses (and court) were totally convinced that his great talent or genius must be served, and it was their duty and privilege. They wanted to do it - it can only have been his Dionysian charisma.

He thought nothing of having tantrums in public places, or getting extremely unpleasant with people who he should have noticed were senior members of the human race. Once, his dinner guests at a restaurant were Mr. & Mrs. Cuttoli, rich patrons of the art, very bourgeois, but Picasso liked them. Mr. Cuttoli suggested Picasso take out French citizenship and make an honest

woman out of Francoise Gilot. Picasso blew up, shouting that he was Spanish first, she was later in his scale of values, and that he had no intention of submitting his life to the miserable petit-bourgeois laws which governed them. His guests were sitting frozen with shock. "Why don't you eat?" he roared loudly. "isn't the food good enough? My God the stuff I get at your house sometimes - but I eat it out of friendship's sake. Now you do the same. You're my guests!" And he picked up his plate and flung it into the sea. He was calmed down by Mrs. Cuttoli, who treated him like an embarrassing small boy who has thrown a public tantrum: "Cher ami, you mustn't get yourself into such a state," she said, and pulled him down into his seat and kissed him. "We love you very much" she said, like a kind and patient mother.

As he got older, his lack of self control got worse and worse, and more and more of his friends were driven away, first by his abominable manners, and secondly because he and Jacqueline capriciously refused admission to all but a few - even those journalists and reporters who had been granted appointments.

As far as painting was concerned, Picasso never doubted that he was a genius. He became the richest artist in the world, and in history. So he excelled in riches as well. He also excelled in

publicity, carefully growing his personal myth. He was renowned for his inexhaustible creative ability, his tireless output, his generosity, his disdain for authority, his bravery for staying in Paris during the Second World War, his immortality. He appeared to go on and on, everyone who saw him was amazed at his vitality at 60, 70, 80. [2.ii.i.]

Picasso's compulsion for and *perspective* on the negative *coloured his experience*. "Few men have dared confront the spiritual void of living in an alien universe as starkly as he did. And in that void, all that was left was a relentless, demonic productivity. Occasionally, ...there was a reconciliation with life, but ultimately only in work was there release. In work and in a kind of everyday petty and paltry cruelty. So anguish, cosmic rootlessness and destructive rage were the fertilizers of his prolific creativity and the seedbed of his sweeping mean-spiritedness."[4] A strong statement, but all too clearly documented in his work. [2.ii.ii.]

His fear demanded that his local reality should be full, of acolytes, friends, his court, work. It must continually prevent the void from manifesting. And to paint as he saw life was not

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[4] ASH: Picasso: Creator & Destroyer: p.265.

only his outlet, but also his weapon for keeping it at bay. And his colossal ego allowed him to believe he succeeded. However, he could get started without lavish adulation, and then he demanded that what he produced was praised to the giddy hilt. There are good Picassos and not so good Picassos, but he desired that ALL Picassos were greeted with the same high praise. He would steal from other artists, too. If he visited them at his studios they were always uneasy. He would take their ideas, do them much better, and then take the ideas firmly to himself.

[2.ii.ii.]

Picasso was *driven to be highly individual*, in fact he isolated himself in one chateau after another, because he seemed unable to relate to life as a whole. He thought of reality as pain, fear, destruction and decay, life was not to be trusted, it was out to get him, and only by endless creativity could death be pushed away. He did not belong in the accepted sense, but instead tricked the void by living in untidy castles. A small example: he was convinced that Francoise Gilot's desertion would condemn her in everyone's eyes, and that no-one would bother with her. He was astounded to discover that she had friends he did not know, who preferred her to him, and over whom he had no influence. It made him very uncomfortable. [2.ii.iii.]

Picasso did not have *cosmic trust*. He trusted nothing, not his

wife, his children, his friends. "There is no such thing as love - there are only proofs of love," he said.[5] And he constantly put those who loved him to the test. Marie-Therese and Dora Maar fighting over him was one of his choicest memories. Now THAT was proof of their love for him. The fact that he deliberately provoked them was part of his fun, and setting them against each other was even more fun. If he displayed tenderness or gentleness, inevitably he would turn and snarl the next day. He called this the high cost of living. Francoise said that whenever she found herself in difficulties, particularly in tangled and complicated relationships, she would glance sideways, and there would be Picasso, brandishing his cloak like the matador, masking where the real trouble was to tease the victim.

[3.i. & ii.]

Picasso's *mode of engagement* was to work as much as possible, have as much sex as he could, and to smoke. He kept the world at bay, literally and figuratively, with his incredible capacity to produce one creation after another. It is said that if an artist wishes to invent, or try, something totally original, he will find it in one of Picasso's works. He has already been there. His work was his magic, personal and external, and it provided everything he had, money, mythology, and insulation against

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[5] Gilot: Life with Picasso: p.284.

everything uncomfortable. Creating was the antithesis of death. His paintings show an obsession with the female body, and the sex act and its attendant symbolism. There are several periods in his life when his paintings show hatred and vindictiveness towards the female form, and the more abstract the form, usually the smaller or more hollow the head. He always claimed to have suffered dreadfully at the hands of women. As mentioned earlier, after Picasso had finished with them, very few could be considered beautiful. The passing of time worried him dreadfully. "If Picasso could detain the course of time, all clocks would stop, the hours would perish, days would come to an end and the earth have to cease its revolutions and wait for him to change his mind. And if it had really been he who had stopped it, the globe would wait in vain. Thus I found Picasso, and thus he must continue. It is necessary for the free pursuit of his destiny."[6] His virtuosity as a painter diminished, so did his sex drive, and he could feel his body was falling apart. He could no longer control his world. His last few years were hell. The illusion that he was just as vital and original as ever took more and more energy to maintain, his own and other people's. The Great Void yawned before him, and he had no background, no tools of intellect, discipline, knowledge to

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[6] Picasso, by Wilhelm Boeck & Jaime Sabartes (Thames & Hudson, 1961).

combat it. [3.iii.]

Picasso's *blind spots* were large obstructions. So large that he ultimately failed to engage fully with life or people. He perceived people in one dimension only, as he related to them, and never how they themselves related to life. His tragedy is like that of Shakespeare's Macbeth - a highly gifted genius going to waste because of material ambition.

Note for page 710:
1. Kahnweiler knew that if he agreed to become one, Picasso would accuse him of doing it because Kahnweiler wanted his business. If he declined, Picasso would take it as a personal affront to his philosophy. Kahnweiler took care to say neither yes nor no. One day, though, Kahnweiler said no, he did not think he would not join the party, because since the death of Stalin and the discovery of all his crimes...
"Ah, you are going to claim you are disgusted with Stalin and that solves everything!" said Picasso.
"Not at all, I've just come to realize something I never understood before, and that is Stalin was a pessimist."
"What are you getting at?" asked Picasso suspiciously.
"Just that. A pessimist. I suppose he must have picked it up in his early years at the seminary, when he was studying theology. Developed a kind of Manichaean dualism, apparently. He must have decided that evil is so well rooted in human nature that he could only eliminate it by wiping out human life. So, after studying the question very carefully, I have come to the conclusion that there's too much of a contradiction there. On one hand, Marxism preaches the doctrine of endless possibilities of human progress; in other words a doctrine based on optimism. Yet Stalin gives us the proof of just how false he thought that doctrine was. He was better placed than anyone to know whether optimism in that matter was possible, and he answered with a thumping negative by killing everyone within reach, apparently on the grounds that human

nature was so bad, there was no other way of settling affairs. Under those conditions, how can you expect an intelligent man to become a Communist?"
"Typical bourgeois sophistry," was Picasso's comment, but he never teased Kahnweiler again about joining the party.

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* ASH: Abbreviation for Arianna Stassinopoulous Huffington used in footnotes.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

FINAL CONCLUSION

FINAL CONCLUSION

Having studied these six people with Cumpsty's Theory of Religion as Belonging in mind, it becomes apparent that belonging is natural and necessary in human beings. Even with abnormally gifted people, they must be at home, i.e. belong, in their "cosmos" in order to use their gifts to the full.

Overtly, religious belonging may be necessary be a balanced human being, though in this thesis five of the case studies took a very detached view of their contemporary religious institutions. Each and every one of us should belong to a cosmos, that is, a race, a history, a value system, a geographical area, a tribe or family, a mother and father, etc. When beings are deprived of some or all of these, aberrations occur.

The case studies in this thesis, however, deal with people who have fulfilled their goals, used their gifts, so enriching the human race. Their modes of belonging have enhanced their gifts, and vice versa. With the exception of Picasso, they have positive, optimistic, and kindly dispositions towards their fellow humans.

Turning to the block of questions at the end of Chapter 1, and used at the end of each case study, several general points worth noting emerge. With the exception of Bach, none of the case studies were overtly religious. With the exception of Picasso, none of them were irreligious. They related politely to their religious cultures, neither courting nor denying a closer acquaintance. As for motivation, all six considered the exercise of their abilities as work, or tasks, and being compelled to put it aside distressed them.

Interestingly, their needs for less confining symbols with which to conceptualize their sense of reality seems largely to fall away. [Question 1.i.ff] With the exception of Einstein, who needed new forms of maths to state his theories concisely and accurately, all the case studies used existing myth and\or symbols, but ever more skillfully as their perceptions of reality deepened and became more penetrating. Leonardo used the human figure to portray ideal states. His inventions drew on ideas gleaned from observations of natural phenomena. Rembrandt used the human figure in most of his work, interpreting it at deeper and deeper levels. In his portraits, he has carefully and penetratingly studied his sitters. They are all quite individual. He used the Biblical myths for further

conceptualizations. The way he paints light conveys the passage of time - many of his pictures have a past, present and future. Bach used the Bible as inspiration for most of his work, pondering on the texts again and again, and musically taking his insights into the visual and emotional realms. Churchill used words, written and spoken, and could use them superlatively. He could, and did, deliberately act to heighten the impact of what he was saying. Picasso's symbolism grew from his involvement with certain elements - mainly the bull-fight and the female body. The bull-fight has been part of Spanish mythology for centuries. He took old symbolisms and used them in personal contexts. The invention of Cubism can be laid at Picasso's door. It was a new way of looking at ordinary objects, which has given rise to abstract art. Einstein's relativity and Picasso & Braque's cubism were "published" under a year apart.

Each case study took the symbols with which he was most comfortable, and used them in unique and explicit ways.

The answers to the second group of questions, Religion, [1.ii.ff] underline that the case studies were not dependent on organized religion or religious doctrine to ground or maintain their identities, not even Bach. Even if they do not use it, they understand why religious ritual is in place. They all stayed

nominally within the religions in which they were born, none of them suffered conversion pangs. The only one who was criticized religiously was Leonardo, by Vasari, who later retracted his statement. Otherwise, Bach was above criticism, Rembrandt lived in a tolerant country, and in the 20th Century religious pursuits are no longer a matter for critical comment. When it is asked "Did they hold it (religious tradition) or did it hold them?"[1] the answer is the religion they grew up in was a dynamic aggregation in all of the cases, which inevitably was perceived differently as they grew older and engaged with more life. And so the relationship to religion changes, and in this way They hold It. But the values, myths and rituals remain deep in the psyche, and in that way Religion holds Them. Even Picasso wanted Gilot to swear to love him in a church. His Catholicism and the concept of religious vows were still with him. However, they all had a profound belief in the fundamental good of the totality, however they modelled it, except, as usual, Picasso. The sense that they belonged in the totality is unquestionable, in the normal five, and there is no doubt that they considered it worthwhile.

They necessarily had to perceive the totality from the stance of their own identity. [2.ii.ff] Each one looked out of his own

[1] Introduction: Questionnaire: 1.ii.iv. page 11.

eyes, and decided for himself how he would engage with life. They were secure in their identities, even if they could not properly annihilate their blind spots. The relationship between their identities and reality as a whole was such that they no longer questioned it. They had tested it and found it good. They all expressed themselves as they did because that was what they were, and if that expression was original, influential, discerning, beautiful, that is because they perceived reality that way. The personalities as such of the case studies are not clearly defined. We know very little about the personal likes and dislikes of Leonardo, Rembrandt, Bach or Einstein. Churchill liked comfort, good food and cigars, but he could accept deprivation fairly easily, as he did in the trenches. Leonardo was lovable, beautiful, and a good courtier. Bach and Einstein were warm and comforting, content with work and home. Einstein had an infectious laugh. Rembrandt loved people and social interaction. Picasso's personality bristled with challenges and competition, he was able to project whatever form of it he liked.

What the case studies did for the contemporaries in religious matters was almost incidental, except for Bach's music, composed for and under the auspices of God. [3.ff] The others did not set out to "improve" humanity. Far from it, the work and ideas

of all, even Picasso, presents the ordinary person with food for thought - avenues in the quest for understanding to explore, maybe even a few answers, but the answers will be reached by the viewer or listener, the input is passive. It is rather like Churchill's muse, who asked if he would "like to try these tools - they amuse some people," when he saw paints, brushes and an easel. The works of the case studies are of a calibre that can be considered as tools to be used creatively.

The Questions have focussed on the conceptualization of their reality, and how they went about expressing it. Cumpsty identifies two languages of discourse, literal discourse and the language of religion.[2] There are, in certain of the case studies, where the language of paint and music illuminates the language of religion, particularly Rembrandt's paintings and Bach's music, and Leonardo's most ideal statements, the *Last Supper, Cartoon of Anne, Virgin and Child* are directly religious in content. Einstein's language in theoretical physics has given rise to a cosmogony, and Picasso's work is an non-Christian statement, he says far more about Dionysus, the Minotaur, Pan, or Bluebeard.

"The Quest for maintenance or realization of belonging to

[2] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chap. 4. p.111-114.

Ultimate Reality"[3] and the shaping of their conceptualizations was a process, and the expressive ability kept pace with the developments which finally focussed in adulthood. Identity, the relationship with "All-that-out-there" is established. The "disturbing enquiry into the reality that one would belong to" is made, the mode of engagement is formed. All the case studies adjusted to their abilities. Picasso was a child prodigy, and the others worked and trained their faculties normally, although it was obvious from an early age that they were gifted. Leonardo trained himself look outward with his gifts of vision, hand/eye co-ordination, making observations (artistic, natural and later mechanical), and his enormous intelligence. "Experience contemplated by reason" describes his mode of engagement, and, as can be expected, he left behind very little of his everyday personality.

Rembrandt wanted to paint from the age of about fourteen, by which time his practical religious training and solid values of humanity were absorbed. There is no evidence that he had a struggle between ideal teaching and practical religion as Churchill and Einstein did, but it seems likely. Rembrandt spent the rest of his life refining his insights and painting skills. Looking at his work as a whole, he must have heard of

[3] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 8, p.172.

the Oracle at Delphi, with its exhortation to "Know thyself." His portraits, self-portraits and history paintings all show a deep concern to know intimately the human condition.

Bach's musical skills were taught as one teaches children to read, but he was not a prodigy as Mozart was. His skills were allied to a clear and logical mind. If Bach had trouble, it was with his fiery temper, but self-discipline brought it under control. He worked for the glory of God.

Churchill, as a young man, tried the army, adventuring, journalism, writing, politics. From practical experience and his self-knowledge, his final choice of career was politics, and he trained himself accordingly, overcoming his stutter and working at presentation. Churchill was born indomitable. No other child of seven could have stood up to the establishment as he did, absolutely refusing to learn Greek or Latin, ever. It was his first major confrontation. Thereafter he never shirked a fight - he would always go into battle.

Einstein's gift was the clearest of clear minds, with vision to match. After a slow start, (not speaking until he was four), he trained carefully and accurately in maths and physics, he decided against teaching and took a humble job in the Patents Office,

which helped his focus and expressive ability. Einstein, from an early age, was concerned with Truth, absolute, constant, unchanging, non-relative Truth. Truth of being, behaviour and work were all vitally important to him. If his work was not true, he wanted to know - hence his willingness to put his work to the test.

Picasso practiced art from the age of seven. He must have been as selfish as Churchill was indomitable. He enjoyed the act of creation (and procreation) more or less to the exclusion of the use of intelligence, but did not develop self discipline, without which harmonization in himself was impossible. In spite of this, he still achieved considerable fame and fortune, and was able to say, in one of his conceited moments, "I wanted to be a painter - I became Picasso." He is the only case study who thinks he is more important than his body of work. Picasso refused the "disturbing enquiry"[4] and wound up with many layers of personality which effectively masked what he really was.

Further to the block of questions answered for each case study, there are other points which merit further discussion.

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[4] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 7, p.165.

"The felt sense of the ultimately real is distilled from the individual's total experience."[5] From all the bits and pieces the individual discerns the nature of the whole. The case studies studied the nature of the whole more intently than most. All affirmed and accepted this world as real, a "world out there". However, the transcendent was modelled differently in each one, it could be known via different methods or routes:. Leonardo modelled it as an extremely subtle nature, in the future, that would become clear and experienceable after death. Rembrandt's Transcendence could be known through the study of self and mankind. Transcendence for Bach was marvelous and real, experienced. Einstein falls into this category too. Churchill relied on God to do His work in His realm, and got on with his own work down here.

Once all these were in place, they were at home with who and where they were, and had no more need to continue searching for a cognitive answer to "What is all that out there?" They were "grounded" in reality, and free from doubt about their modes of engagement. They did not necessarily stop asking questions, or striving for better answers, but the answers take on a depth and penetration which is of great value to the human race. The answers are provided from the evidence of experience, post quest.

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[5] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 8: P. 172.

In other words, the realities they distilled from the totality became clearer and clearer in their work.

The case studies have all had grief in their lives. Leonardo's is undocumented, but he was obviously capable of great feeling. Rembrandt lost all of his close family, with the exception of his baby grandson, before he died. Bach lost his mother and father when he was very young, his first wife, and half of his children. Churchill never ceased to regret his relationship with his father, and they lost a four-year-old daughter. Einstein was above such things. He felt grief, but it was part of material humanity, and because his cosmic trust was so profound, materials of any sort did not hold him. Picasso lost his sister when she was 10, two of his friends committed suicide, and several died. He greeted each loss with a surge of hate and rage. Their ways of "belonging", with the exception of Picasso, kept their grief healthy, or healed it without bitterness. Grief and death were part of life.

All of them "belonged" sufficiently to realize that life is fundamentally unified, even though personal experience is unique. The sense that one is part of a whole, diverse though it is, is very stabilizing. And equalizing. Picasso saw life as out to get the better of him - he was in competition to it, he felt it

as malign.

They belonged in the "destined" sense, that they felt they had something of worth to give back to that to which they belonged. A historical sense of belonging has a certain importance, giving depth and background to expression and experience. On the other hand, their belonging secured their identity. They knew exactly who they were, to the extent that they dispensed with the need to hide behind a mask, or project certain personalities. Each one is unique - naturally, but they were not isolated or chancing it. Each has a strong sense of reality, a bigger reality than that of normal people, a valid feeling about the Ultimately Real, however they model it. Where this is absent, as in Picasso, there is evidence of fear.

These people are a product of their history as well as their contemporary times. Leonardo grew out of the Latin medieval tradition, sophisticated and cultured, with Roman hard-headedness rather than Greek emotionalism. This hard-headedness caused him to reject most of the rampant Platonism of his time, but his individuality was contemporary Renaissance, as was his desire to probe the secrets of nature, by experiment and experience. He made an enormous contribution to the explosion of knowledge which took place at this time. But he reverted to the deep call of

medieval values in the will he left. Complex as Leonardo was, he still belongs to the Latin Mediterranean, the Renaissance, Italy, Milan and Florence, and he loved Aristotle and Albertus Magnus, and Nature in her varying degrees of power and subtlety. He used his great gifts in ways compatible with his background and contemporary thought. His own experience tempered his value system. He was in command of his great gifts, and in spite of his desire for personal privacy, he much enriched his fellow men.

Rembrandt's expression is probably the most universal of the lot. The dullest and the most intelligent respond to his art, the poorest and the richest, the youngest and the oldest. First and foremost, he belonged to his fellow human beings. He too has roots in the Middle Ages, but the Middle Ages of Northern Europe. There is a profound difference between Northern and Southern European cultures. The Northern European had different demands made on his mode of engagement. They were far less romantic, more practically materialistic and doggedly determined rather than intrigued by the elegant and sophisticated. The Northerners were discovering the rewards of mercantile endeavours, where the Southerners preferred banking and financial affairs. The Northern Europeans love light and the sun, an extremely important

factor. Suddenly, in the 11th and 12th Centuries, the Gothic Cathedrals had risen up, mirroring the central place Christianity held there. In the 16th century, Martin Luther pulled Northern Europe back to a more comfortable Christianity (for them), and they were having their own Renaissance, albeit a century later than the Italians. These are some of the aggregations which were part of Rembrandt. His family were plain folk, decent, honest and hardworking. All his life Rembrandt could see, when he drew, the souls of people. And he drew them with the greatest of compassion. He loved the "little people" in Biblical history, which was also the long history of the Jews. He loved the Jews, with their antique faces and gentle independence. The level at which he painted was universal, in spite of the very strong Dutch flavour. He mirrors the human condition. His reality was holistic - he looked out at Everyman, and inwards at himself. In his last self portrait, Rembrandt looks out of the canvas, tired and sad, but still in command. He had lost Hendrickje, Cornelia and Titus. He endures, but he is not without hope. He is calm and serene in his faith in life and God.

Bach is another Northern European. Albert Schwietzer says his roots are so emphatically in the Middle ages that he is the last of the medieval composers, with their plainchants and logical

harmonies. But he is also labelled "Baroque," which is (as an art style) over-ornamented, lavish, and romantic. He is a true product of the German race - ordered, disciplined, hardworking, conscientious. He is quite happy in contemporary Lutheran Germany - indeed his ease in his environment enabled him to have an inner life as rich as any of the medieval mystics. It must be remembered that both Luther and Bach loved light and music, and they both enjoyed a good joke. Germany of Bach's time was not heavy and dour. Bach is all of a piece - his mode of engagement, his value system, his sense of reality and of the Ultimately Real are truly integrated. He was at ease in his belonging. The dichotomy in Bach's reality was overcome, and he experienced the totality.[6] His powers of expression are sublime. He is excellent proof that suffering, guilt, or anxious individualism are not necessary conditions of supreme creativity.

Churchill charges irresistibly out of the legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. He gallops onto the battle ground, colours flying, lances waving, armour clanking, for God England and the Right. The bigger the battle, the larger the battle ground, the more numerous the dragons, the happier he was. His vocabulary favoured words like gallant, valour, resolute, honour, stout-hearted, grave. He was deeply romantic in the

[6] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 8. p.174.

same style - a full-blooded royalist traditionalist. He was extremely proud of his ancestor, the first Duke of Marlborough, Queen Anne's General. He took full romantic pride in being an Englishman. His aggregations are all English, in spite of his having an American mother. His approach to life was, of course, coloured deeply by his background. It was his duty to be involved in the Affairs of Men. On a personal level, he had great strength and courage, plus a capacity for work probably only equalled by Napoleon. But however strong, resolute, powerful he was, he was contained within the English political system. For Churchill, the totality was a great wonderful intricate pageant, a marvelous kaleidoscope of shifting situations which needed constant shepherding and attention. His curiosity was insatiable.

Einstein is so "above-it-all" that it's as though he strayed onto this planet by mistake, with his crystal clear, brilliant intelligence. He was not material in any way, apart from the fact that he needed a body in this environment which required a certain amount of looking after, a task at which he, Einstein, was hopeless. Indeed, he found organic life and the life sciences un-orderly and somewhat irrational. His body of work, too, seems to sail in from a much higher plane beyond the Earth. He was a totally self-sufficient individual, who needed nothing

the world could give him. And yet he was not cold. On the contrary, he was a wonderful man to be with, kindly, genial and helpful. He had no doubt about the realities of the world, no illusions about human behaviour, but the reality which was most meaningful to him was the Universe, what it was, how it maintained itself, and how it came into being. It was the Universe to which he ultimately belonged. He was visionary in that this awe-inspiring totality was only a thought away for him. Einstein never resisted or fought with the material world, he just moved aside and let it go. Of the case studies, there is the least possible stress in Einstein's belonging. He is attached to the world by the lightest of ties, and yet his humanity and his work in theoretical physics is one of the most powerful legacies ever left to mankind.

Picasso, I feel, is a case study which demonstrates graphically what happens when the fundamental sense of belonging is damaged, or incomplete. He is the antithesis of Einstein. One can say they were comparably gifted, but the use they made of their respective gifts is still antithetical. Picasso was Spanish. Spanish history is dark and cruel. The Moors left Spain in the 10th century. The Church in Spain became particularly powerful. The Spaniards fostered the Albigensian crusades against the Cathars in France in the 11th and 12th centuries, most successful

by their standards, and ran the Inquisitions in the 16th and 17th centuries, responsible for the expulsion of the Jews, some of whom Rembrandt met in Holland. The Conquistadors ravaged South America, and shipped the gold back to Spain. The Spanish aristocracy, particularly the Royal Family, spent it on themselves, not a cent was used in investments or improvements for the country. When it was finished, so was the Spanish "renaissance". All they had to show for it were some beautiful palaces and the work of Cervantes, Velasquez, Goya, El Greco. The incredibly strict etiquette at court, and the power acquired by the Church and bureaucracies made information dissemination extremely hazardous, and Spain is a mass of secrecies. Picasso was sufficiently Spanish in his cruelty, his fear of bureaucracy and love of intrigue, his hatred of aristocracy, and his attitude to money. He spent what he wanted, but was very difficult about disgorging it for others. All information was secret and powerful.

From an early age Picasso loathed being poor. Fortunately for his rampant materialism, he began to make money in his twenties, and was well-off by the time he was thirty. He also cared passionately about being the best, the first, the most *avant garde*, the most influential. His mode of engagement was riddled with competitive game-plays, to test, provoke, outwit others.

Very little could be openly discussed. His expressions were mostly negative, life was about decay. Reality was diminished for him when he thought he could create his own, on his own terms. As Berger said, when Picasso was an old man, there was no proper conversation, only a lot of allusions with meaning only for the initiated. Loss, poverty, isolation, distortion, superstition, contradiction, distrust, betrayal, these things form most of his vocabulary, painted and verbal. The number of works in his enormous *oeuvre* that qualify as beautiful, serene, peaceful, are remarkably few. The continual practice of this mode of engagement made recognizing and acknowledging the reality of All-that-out-there in a positive light extremely difficult, eventually impossible. The act of painting gave him great pleasure. At the times when the sexual pleasure was as good as the painting pleasure, he produced very fine art. He enjoyed being the sorcerer, the magical transformer of ordinary objects (including the human form). The transformations proved to him how creative he was, he felt himself Protean. And so his considerable gift for art contributed to the illusion, enabling him to continue to pervert his reality. With this gift he could create his own mythology, and what is more, have the outside world believe in it.

A further drawback for Picasso, arising from his rampant

materialism, was his belief that this world was all there was. Any metaphysical postulation was nonsense. Overt spirituality offended him, as in Juan Gris and Paul Klee. He was angry with Matisse for designing a Chapel. His value system was rooted in his own physical body, sex, the act of painting, his possessions, his fame, the power money and influence gave him. He could deny himself nothing material, and as mentioned before, he made no attempt to question or understand anything in the nature of an Ultimately Real at all. He refused the "disturbing enquiry into the reality that one would belong to."7

Picasso was powerful enough to create his own reality. But in doing so, he did not stay connected with the reality of life as a whole. He could not perceive the totality. Altruism was unknown to him, being a metaphysical concept. His huge ego demanded that he was the centre of any situation. Inevitably, old age and death crept up on him, and he could no longer keep them at bay. When he was compelled to look on the reality outside his little world, it terrified him. He was fundamentally alienated, possibly the most painful and frightening condition for any human being to be in. In Cumpsty's terms, he no longer belonged.

His final self portrait is the opposite of Rembrandt's. He drew

7 Introduction: p.13.

himself fractured with fear, with staring eyes, grimly compressed mouth, tension is in every line. It is an ugly portrait, scratched, skull-like, threatened, out there facing it alone.

Enquiry implies discovering answers, disturbing or otherwise. Aggregations[8] grow and change or may even be shed if they do not prove fruitful. They are elements of personality. But "identity" is that which decides whether an aggregation is suitable or not for the individual concerned. The more powerful and discerning the identity, the less need there is for the mask of personalities. W.E. Henley wrote:

> I am the Master of my Fate,
> I am the Captain of my Soul.[9]

In this context, "Master" and "Captain" perfectly describe the role played by identity. It is much more than personality, and may use concepts such as the "witness", and "consciousness."[10] The case studies are all "Captains" of their souls, even Picasso. He, or his Captain, decided not to pursue any disturbing enquiry.

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[8] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: p.388 ff.

[9] W.E. Henley: *Invictus*, 1896.

[10] Cumpsty: Religion as Belonging: Chapter 11. p.333.

It is totally inconceivable that he was never presented with the opportunity to enquire into that to which he belonged, or the meaning of life. But he made the greatest use of personalties, lots of masks to deceive the person in front of him. Interestingly, he draws a great number of masks in throughout his life's work. The "Captain" identity tailors the abilities, characters, experiences and learning curves into a suitable mode of engagement for the individual. Identity is not self-image, its self. Where true identity, acquired life-knowledge and sense of unity or belonging are present in the act of creativity, so that which is created may begin to speak the universal language.

Bach, Rembrandt and Einstein touched visionary or mystical levels of being regularly, Leonardo and Churchill not quite so often, and if Picasso had been aware of what such a level of being was, he would not have persecuted it so strongly when he met it. There is no doubt that there is more than the physical to life, as exemplified in Picasso, to which one belongs. It is also quite clear that it is fruitful and worthwhile trying to understand what it is.

It can be said that Cumpsty's Theory of Religion as Belonging can be used positively in diverse areas of human study. Five of the

case studies illustrate the strengths and achievements of those who are at home with their identities, not estranged from their aggregations, and not striving to be something different. This thesis refines the theory by showing that the case studies have gone beyond the need to ask questions, and have ceased to be dependent on answers. It is possible to be at ease with life, and yet contribute something of worth. The thesis tries too to get closer to what constitutes an identity, one of lasting value.

Cumpsty says of the "destined human" beings that they have given up looking for cognitive answers to questions about reality. We do not think this is necessarily the case. What they have done was cease to be dependent upon such answers for their sense of belonging.

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